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TO THE UNIVERSITY

BY

ROBERT FINCH, M. A.

BALLIOL COLLEGE

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JAMES HOGG.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

EDINBURGH:

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TO

THE POETIC MIRROR.

THE Editor claims no merit in the following work, save that of having procured from the Authors the various Poems of which the volume is composed; for, as to the arrangement, it is casual, and simply as the pieces came to hand.

A number of years have now elapsed since he first conceived the idea of procuring something original from each of the principal living Bards of Britain, and publishing those together, judging that such a work, however small, could not fail of forming a curiosity in literature. On applying to them all personally, or by letter, he found that the greater part of them entered

into his views with more cordiality than he had reason to expect; and, after many delays and disappointments, he is at last enabled to give this volume to the public. He regrets that there are many of the living Poets, whom he highly esteems, that have not yet complied with his request; but as he is almost certain of something from each of them being forthcoming, he hopes, at no distant period, to be able to lay before the world another volume, at least more diversified than the present.

With respect to those who have already so kindly supported him in the present undertaking, it behoves him to say nothing.—The pages which follow will show how well they have kept their words; and he takes this public opportunity of thanking them most cordially for their liberal assistance, to which he is conscious that his merits have in no degree entitled him.

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THE GUERILLA.

THE GUERILLA.

1.

Sore for the selfishness of men I wail,—
Scarce other motives human action guide;—
And sore I pity those of intellect frail,
Who in aught else save their own strength confide.
That might, that soul, with Heaven alone allied,
May all the casual gusts of fate defy;
But he who trusts in power or kingly pride,
Well it behoves, like Britons, to rely
On miscreants' doubtful aid, for thankless knaves to die!

2.

It hath been said, and suiteth well my tale,
That Spain's hot peasants danger strove to shun,
Even when their foemen sorest did prevail,
And ravaged every vale of Arragon.
If there is wealth to gain, or insult done,
The proud and selfish Spaniard aught will dare;
Farther he cares not—feels not—but anon
Flies to his gleesome dance and jocund fare,
And gives unto the winds his vows and patriot care.

3.

Erewhile, in hamlet of full old regard,
A goodly hind, Alayni hight, did won,
His parents' healthful toil who daily shared,
And on each festal eve, when was begun
The blithsome dance, and frolic—there was none
Who ruled the sport with such resistless sway;
And when, perchance, his will was lothly done,
His froward mood displeasure did bewray;
Ne failed he then to thwart and contravene the play.

4.

Oh, me! he was a hot and restless wight:
No rival nor superior might he brook,
In feat of deft activity or might,
Nor even in mirth, or maiden's favouring look.
At fall of evening, oftimes he forsook
His father's home, some secret deeds to dare:
Never was known the pathway that he took,
Although his walks were watched with prying care;
But many doubtful stains his raiment daily bare.

5.

One maid he loved—young Kela of the dale,
With passion vehement, and her alone:
The foemen came—No tears could aught avail,
For they were men of France, and never known
To feel for pain or misery but their own.
The village homes were plundered and despoiled;
The beauteous village maids of Arragon
They dragged from parents' home in anguish wild,
To their voluptuous tents, to live in bondage vilde.

6.

Kela, the loveliest of these mountain maids,
Marot, the leader, for his own did claim;
All proffers of redemption he evades,
Answering to all her plaints with words of shame:
Loudly she wailed, and called Alayni's name,
While he, aroused to madness and despair,
Raved in such words as tongue did never frame,
Smote his perturbed breast and tore his hair,
And to have red revenge by Jesus' cross he sware.

7.

Fast did the frenzy seize the village crew;
Around Alayni thronged they each one;
Their maids, their wealth, had vanished from their view.
Frantic they flew unto the altar-stone,
And, kneeling round, with hands laid thereupon,
They vowed to God nor sleep nor rest to take
Until the spoilers should by blood atone
For the unholy pillage they did make;
So help them Christ in heaven, for youth and virtue's sake!

8.

Man, maid, and matron, swore eternal feud
Against the ruthless reavers and their race;
To madness changed their sullen lassitude,
Forth did they spread abroad from place to place,
Wrath in each voice and wildness on each face:
Aloud they cried for vengeance manifold;
Much magnified their scathe and sore disgrace.
Each Arragonian, when the tale was told,
Caught the wild flame in guise which pen may not unfold.

9.

From orchard and from field the peasants run,
Even the grey sires refuse to stay behind;
Ten thousand bosoms pant beneath the sun,
Ten thousand vows are borne upon the wind.
All towards blood and massacre inclined
The throng marched forth—Alayni led them on.
'Twas night—their foes were all to sloth resigned;
For they had wassailed deep, feasting upon
The spoils and maiden charms of plundered Arragon.

10.

They knew nor arms nor armed troop was nigh;
The hostile peasantry they laughed to scorn:
Still were they lying there, and long shall lie!
What bands of spoilers waked not on the morn!
In one short hour an army was o'erborne,
Slaughtered like sheep, or in the flight cut down;
Small was the number left to stray forlorn,
Nor could they tell by whom they were o'erthrown—
An army late there was, but army now was none.

11.

Alayni with three comrades madly sped
Unto the tent where hated Marot lay;
They found him lying on voluptuous bed,
And in his arms his lovely helpless prey:
Like one she seemed who longed much for day;
Her moistened cheek no downy pillow prest,
Her raven locks, dishevelled and astray,
Hung o'er her panting bosom, ill at rest!
Which turned was away from her destroyer's breast.

12.

" Up, noble captain !—up and taste our cheer;
A Spanish festival awaits thee nigh;
To lie voluptuously in slumber here
Great shame it is, while souls so quickly fly
From this to regions of a genial sky.
Up, noble captain—thou must come away !"
Alayni said, and raised him violently;
" Treason !" the captain cried, in wild dismay;
Albeit they loudly laughed at his forlorn array.

13.

Alayni dragged him forth unto the green,
With burning hand entwisted in his hair;
Sore did he writhe, and loudly called, I ween,
For kindred arms, but kindred none were there;
While him they mocked with light and jocund air,
And much did aggravate his woeful plight.
Oh, it forsooth is grievous to declare
How they did mangle that poor hapless wight;
Nor ceased their ruthless game till he was slain outright!

14.

" Rush forth," Alayni said, " into the field,
The work of death goes unresisted on!
Rush forth, my friends, our haughty foemen yield;
For me, the while, I shortly must begone
To comfort my true love, but all alone,
As meet it is, with her I would remain.
Strong be your arms, your hearts to-night be stone,
To-morrow, soft as they were wont again;
God speed your patriot swords! Haste forth into the plain."

15.

With torch in hand, and all with blood besprent,
And looks that might the stoutest heart dismay,
Forthwith he entered the dismal tent,
Where, all forlorn, the lovely Kela lay:
He placed his torch ere word he deigned to say,
Then gazed on her sweet face with sorrow steeped;
At first she clasped him in fondest way,
But minding what she was, her blood ycrept,
She hid her youthful face with both her hands, and wept.

16.

" Well may'st thou wail," he said, in deepest tone,
" That face I loved above all earthly thing!
But never more shall smile beam thereupon,
For thou art lost beyond recovering!
To life of scorn can thy young spirit cling,
To kindred and to friends a loathful stain,
A beacon set each lover's heart to wring?
It may not be—a momentary pain—
One penance undergone, and thou art pure again!"

17.

She looked into his face, and there beheld
The still unmoving darkness of his eye;
She thought of that could never be cancelled,
And lay in calm and sweet benignity;
Down by her side her arms outstretched lie,
Her beauteous breast was fairer than the snow,
And then with stifled sob and broken sigh
Its fascinating mould was heaving so,—
Never was movement seen so sweetly come and go!

18.

He drew his bloody poniard from his waist,
And pressed against her breast its point of steel;
No single boon she to his ear addressed,
Calm did she lie as one who did not feel!
No shiver once did agony reveal;
Scarce did she move a finger by her side,
Though her heart's blood around her did congeal;
With mild but steady look his face she eyed,
And once upon her tongue his name in whisper died.

19.

With gloomy mien, and unrelenting heart,
O'er her he hung and watched her life's decay;
He marked the pulse's last convulsive start,
And the sweet breath in fetches waste away.
Just ere the last these words she did assay:
"Now all is past—unblamable I die."
Then her pale lips did close no more for aye,
A dim blue haze set slowly o'er her eye,
And low on purpled couch that mountain flower did lie.

20.

" Ay, it is so!" exclaimed he—" and 'tis well,
Even yet I would not wish thy life reprieved—
Of thy firm soul shall future ages tell,
Nor could thy spotless fame have been retrieved—
Oh, ne'er to be washed out the stain received!
Fair sacrifice, thou hast not died in vain!"
He prest the breast which now no longer heaved,
And his warm lips to hers did closely strain;
But ah! that passive lip—it did not kiss again!

21.

" By this dear blood," he cried, " again I swear
Revenge unslaked for ever to pursue;
Heaven was my witness how I held thee dear,
And shall be witness what I'll dare for you!"
In the warm tide his arms he did imbue,
And form'd a cross of blood upon his breast;
Then, maniac-like, forth to the fight he flew
In Marot's gear and spangled helmet drest,
And Kela's raven hair waved on it for a crest.

22.

Blood was his joy, and havoc was his meed,
His direful rage no living foe might shun;
If there was bloody work, or ruthless deed,
Forthwith by him that bloody work was done.
Great was the spoil and booty that was won,
But greater waited them of gold and store:
A convoy came, such there was never known,
Forth did they rush ten thousand men and more,
And found the encumbered foe on Ebro's winding shore.

23.

Alayni led the van—on him they looked
As something more than man in prowess bold;
One to be feared he seemed, but hardly brooked;
A demon spirit not to be controlled.
Mounted on steed with bits and spurs of gold,
No leader ever wore more martial air,
No banner o'er his host was seen unrolled,
Save the red cross of blood his bosom bare,
And waving in the wind the virgin's raven hair.

24.

O wild was the confusion and the throng,
For the Guerillas wore the foe's array;
They mixed with them and pressed their ranks among:
Judge of their wonderment and sore dismay,
When through their bodies passed in mortal way
The scymitar or spear with ruthless blow!
Each deemed himself of treason's hand the prey,
And wildly looked upon his murderous foe;—
He knew the garb full well—the face he did not know.

25.

He who hath seen a ship triumphant sail,
Full gaily on before the breeze's wing,
High wooing in the clouds the fitful gale,
Till, proudly bold and undistinguishing,
Instant she rolleth with resistless swing
Where two opposing tides together flow,
While mariners to mast and rigging cling,
And wot not how to steer or where to go,—
He may conceive the scene, and he alone can know.

26.

O how Alayni joyed in the deray
And wild astonishment that seized the foe;
Like greedy wolf that gorges up his prey,
Or hungry lion, did he onward go;
And over wounded warriors lying low,
Spurning and writhing in most piteous case,
Full joyful did he prance; and loved it so,
He reined his horse to rear upon the place,
Causing his mailed hooves deform the human face!

27.

They called for mercy, and their arms threw down;
But fierce Alayni when their plight he saw,
He spurred, and, laughing loud, rushed them upon,
Gashing their bodies so, withouten awe
Of warrior usance or of nature's law,—
They deemed him demon in the shape of man,
Ne could they from the massacre withdraw
Who followed him, for still their eyes foreran
Young Kela's coal-black hair ystreaming in the van.

28.

Fair were the dames who came with that array,
With their proud lords the wealth of Spain to share,
By the Guerillas rudely borne away;
O how they 'gan with plaints to load the air!
Though youth and maiden innocence were there,
Alayni purposed that very night
On one huge pile to stretch their bodies fair,
To watch the flame ascending fierce and bright,
And with their dying throes feast his distempered
sight.

29.

But Juan, a right brave and courteous youth,
Dared to oppose the baleful sacrifice:
Soon was he joined by young and old; for sooth
He feared no frown from dark Alayni's eyes,
Who all alone had stood in this emprize,
And forced was, though sore enraged, to yield.
For beauteous captive then each warrior vies—
O woful doom! upon the sanguine field,
Far better had their blood their first betrothment
sealed.

30.

Deep in an orange grove the feast was spread,
No lovelier scene in nature could be seen;
The loaded boughs were bending over-head,
Drooping with golden fruit and foliage green:
Fast flowed the wine, till every youthful mien
Was lighted up to jocund mirth the while;
So gay their humour and retorts so keen,
To captive's cheek they almost did beguile
The languid lines of joy in momentary smile.

31.

But dark Alayni at their head still held
His stern demeanour and his downcast eye,
And when to listening or to speech compelled,
Red was his look and sullen the reply,
As if his mind on incidents gone by
Hung with a dry and hollow thirstiness,
Or toiled in trouble through futurity,
Unable for one moment to repress
The agony within of spirit comfortless.

32.

The common woes that human kind belay
May by the pen or language be defined;
The sigh may tell of them, the tear betray,
Like these, away they pass upon the wind;
But that insatiate yearning of the mind
Still preying, hungering, craving, still to prey,
Doomed never bourn or resting-place to find;
O that must torture, undivulged for aye,
Save in the soul's still voice, the eye's perturbed ray.

33.

That voice inaudible, each spirit there
Seemed to have heard or felt upon it creep;
When shot along Alayni's troubled glare,
That instant all were hushed in silence deep,
As lightning's gleam that quivers down the steep,
Searing the cheek of mirth and jollity:
Down sunk the eve—the captive maidens weep,
The motley group right wearied are to see,
By wassailing o'ercome and rampant revelry.

34.

Alayni rose, and waved his hand on high—
All silent sat before that face so grim;
" A health!" he cried, and followed with his eye
Till every cup was filled unto the brim;
He beckoned short—each look was turned on him,
" Here's to the dead and those that soon must die!"
'Gan every eye and every brain to swim,
As up they raised the cup, without reply,
" Here's to the dead," they said, " and those that soon
must die!"

35.

Alayni vanishes in darksome shade,
Home to his cabin each Guerilla reels,
Loaded with spoil, and leading captive maid,
Or high-born dame, that sore degradance feels;
In vain she supplicates, in vain she kneels,
The high-flushed conquerors will take no nay.
Deep is the sleep each weary eye that seals;
But there is one abroad till break of day,
From whom the shuddering watch-dog growling turn
away.

36.

O follow not that dark perturbed form
Down by the winding wave or shadowy tree,
Whose mind would better suit the raving storm
Than such a scene of mild tranquillity!
He sees a form no other eye can see,
He hears a voice no other ear can hear;
A comely breast heaving with agony
Is still before his eye, and in his ear
Whispers a voice of woe to his moved spirit dear.

37.

Can that sweet voice induce to vengeful deed?
Can that unearthly stillness of the eye
Arouse to murder or to suicide?
Oh, it is ever present, ever nigh!
With blasphemy and cursing his reply
Is fully fraught—his eye-balls wildly stare,
With horrid laughter hell he does defy;
Then turns his brow to heaven with fiend-like air,
And flouts the eternal God in mockery of prayer!

38.

Is the brain fevered, or has baleful fiend
Expelled humanity and entered in,
That thus his mouth and nostrils wide distend?
Gasping he seems for breath, but cannot win
So much of the night-air, that, cool and thin,
Wanders o'er earth, yet will not quench the heat
That burns his fervid panting chest within:
O, Heaven! can life-blood only that abate?
Did'st thou the human frame for slaughter thus create?

39.

Millions have bled that sycophants may rule,
Have fallen to dust and left no trace behind;
And yet we say that Heaven is merciful,
And loves and cares for all the human kind;
And we will spread our hands, and mouthe the wind,
With fulsome thanks for all its tenderness.
Ah me! that man, preposterously blind,
Should feel, hear, see, reflect, yet not the less
Hope in his hopeless state of abject nothingness!

40.

Poor worm! to death, doubt, and despondence born,
How blest art thou entrusting Providence!
Oh, thou hast nought to dread, though all forlorn!
Thou hast a guardian, a sure defence!
There rest, environed in Omnipotence,
In safety rest———Alas! and woe is me,
That tyrant should, on any vague pretence,
Drunkard, or madman, do away with thee,
Thou thing of high regard!—of immortality!

41.

That live-long night by village mansion sped
A darkling ruffian all in blood besmeared,
With breath repressed, with swift and silent tread,
To every dwelling, every couch he neared,—
No guardian angel of the fair appeared.
Heaven wept in copious dews—uprose the day:
What horrors brain of wakening lover seared,
When in his arms he found the gelid clay,
Or rolled from his embrace the severed head away!

42.

Oh, many a faultless dame was slain that night,
That none might 'scape in lawless couch that lay;
Like the sweet children of the Bethlehemite,
Who died that one might not escape away.
Great pity both!—But, fully to repay
To men the waste of children's guiltless blood,
Myriads of benefits in fair array
From thence have sprung, the yearning spirit's food—
Such base beginning, sure, could not but end in good.

43.

From this night-slaughter benefits were few,
Save to the maidens who full long had pined;
Of this be well assured, that all is true
By bloated priestcraft evermore defined
Of wisdom in all things by Heaven designed.
But to my tale—O many a weeping eye,
And much astonishment and anger reigned,
O'er all Cinea's vale, where hamlets lie
Thick as the diamond sparks in Autumn's midnight sky.

44.

Dark moved the vale with many a funeral train,
O'er many a sepulchre the tear was shed;
For who can bear to look on woman slain—
The breast of comeliness, and beauteous head,
That nought but love and kindness cherished,
Dishonoured and consigned to cheerless gloom?—
Can see the flower of nature lowly laid,
From hand that should have guarded meet her doom,
In land of life and beauty never more to bloom?

45.

Yet, saving Juan, who in manly wise
Withstood the shameful deed, no man was slain;
His bosom was upripped in woeful guise,
And from its habitance his heart was ta'en.
Well did they know the source of all their pain,
Well knew the savage hand that this had done.
They sought Alayni, but they sought in vain:
His game of death was o'er, and he was gone
Far from his native vale 'mid bloodier scenes to won.

46.

I've heard of one, of whom have many heard,
That on Segovia's mountains roamed a while,
A savage hero of most strange regard,
On whose dark visage never beamed a smile,
Whose beard was never trimmed, whose ruthless toil
Of slaughter only with existence ceased,
Who died in maniac guise 'mid bloody broil,
Laughing aloud, yet pressing to his breast
A tiar of raven hair which every morn he kissed.

47.

It was Alayni—dost thou wail his case?—
Beloved unhappy, restless unbeloved.
Oh, there are minds that not for happiness
Were framed here nor hereafter, who ne'er proved
A joy, save in some object far removed,
Who leave with loathing what they longed to win,
That evermore to that desired have roved,
While the insatiate gnawing is within,
And happiness for aye beginning to begin.

EPISTLE TO MR R. S——.

EPISTLE TO Mr R. S——.

Melrose, Teviotdale, August 3.

Dear S——, while the southern breeze
Floats, freshening, from the upland leas,
Whispering of Autumn's mellow spoils
And jovial sports and grateful toils,
Awakening in the softened breast
Regrets and wishes long supprest,
O, come with me once more to hail
The scented heath, the sheafy vale,
The hills and streams of Teviotdale.

'Tis but a parting pilgrimage
To save from Time's destroying rage,
And changeful Fortune's withering blast,
The hallowed pictures of the past.
And though my steps have lingered long
From scenes that prompt the poet's song,
Till almost in my heart has died
The flame that glowed with boyish pride,
For *this* I'll wake once more the strain,
Which else had ne'er been waked again.
And, there, we'll woo the visions wild
Which first on opening fancy smiled,
By breezy dawn, by quiet noon,
Beneath the bright broad harvest-moon,
Or 'midst the mystic shadows dim
Which round the car of Twilight swim;
While dreams of glory spring to birth,
More lovely than the forms of earth.

Then come, dear comrade! welcome still
In every change of good or ill,

Whom young affection's wishes claim,
And friendship ever finds the same—
Awake with all thy flow of mind,
With fancy bright and feelings kind,
And tune with me the rambling lay
To cheer us on our mountain way.

Say, shall we wander where the swain,
Bent o'er his staff, surveys the plain,
With lyart cheeks and locks of grey,
Like patriarch of the olden day?—
Around him ply the reaper band,
With lightsome heart and eager hand,
And mirth and music cheer the toil,—
While sheaves that stud the russet soil,
And sickles gleaming in the sun,
Tell jocund AUTUMN is begun.

How gay the scenes of harvest morn,
Where Ceres pours her plenteous horn—

The hind's hoarse cry from loading car,
The voice of laughter from afar,
The placid master's sober joy,
The frolic of the thoughtless boy—
Cold is the heart when charms like these
Have lost their genial power to please!
But yet, my friend, there is an hour
(Oft has thy bosom owned its power,)
When the full heart, in pensive tone,
Sighs for a scene more wild and lone.
Oh then, more sweet on Scotland's shore
The beetling cliff, the breakers' roar,
Or moorland waste, where all is still,
Save wheeling plover's whistle shrill,—
More sweet the seat by ancient stone,
Or tree with lichens overgrown,
Than richest bower that autumn yields,
'Midst merry England's cultured fields.—
Then, let our pilgrim footsteps seek
Old Cheviot's pathless mossy peak;

For there the Mountain Spirit still
Lingers around the lonely hill,
To guard his wizard grottos hoar,
Where Cimbrian sages dwelt of yore;
Or, shrouded in his robes of mist,
Ascends the mountain's shaggy breast,
To seize his fearful seat—upon
The elf-enchanted Hanging Stone,—
And count the kindred streams that stray
Through the broad regions of his sway!—
Fair sister streams that wend afar
By bloomy bank or barren scaur,
Now hidden by the clustering brake,
Now lost amid the mountain lake,
Now clasping, with protecting sweep,
Some mouldering castle's moated steep;
Till, issuing from the uplands brown,
Fair rolls each flood by tower and town;
The hills recede, and on the sight
Swell the bold rivers broad and bright.

The eye—the fancy almost fails
To trace them through their thousand vales,
Winding these Border hills among,
(The boast of chivalry and song),
From B———t's banks of softest green
To the rude verge of dark Lochskene.—
'Tis a heart-stirring sight to view,
Far to the westward stretching blue,
That frontier ridge, which erst defied
The invader's march, the oppressor's pride;—
The bloody field, for many an age,
Of rival nations' wasteful rage;
In later times a refuge given
To exiles in the cause of Heaven.

Far inland, where the mountain crest
O'erlooks the waters of the west,
And, 'midst the moorland wilderness,
Dark moss-cleuchs form a drear recess,
Curtained with ceaseless mists which feed
The sources of the Clyde and Tweed,—

There, injured Scotland's patriot band
For faith and freedom made their stand,
When traitor kings, who basely sold
Their country's fame for Gallic gold,—
Too abject o'er the free to reign,—
Warned by a father's fate in vain,—
In bigot fury trampled down
The race who oft preserved their crown:—
There, worthy of his masters, came
The despots' champion, *bloody Graham*,
To stain for aye a warrior's sword,
And lead a fierce, though fawning horde,
The *human* bloodhounds of the earth,
To hunt the peasant from his hearth!
—Tyrants! could not misfortune teach
That man has rights beyond your reach?
Thought ye the torture and the stake
Could that intrepid spirit break,
Which even in woman's breast withstood
The terrors of the fire and flood?—

Yes—though the sceptic's tongue deride
Those martyrs who for conscience died,—
Though modish history blight their fame,
And sneering courtiers hoot the name
Of men who dared alone be free
Amidst a nation's slavery,—
Yet long for them the poet's lyre
Shall wake its notes of heavenly fire;
Their names shall nerve the patriot's hand,
Upraised to save a sinking land;
And piety shall learn to burn
With holier transports o'er their urn!

But now, all sterner thoughts forgot,
Peace broods upon the peasant's cot;
And if tradition still prolongs
The memory of his father's wrongs,
'Tis but the grateful thought that borrows
A blessing from departed sorrows.—
How lovely seems the simple vale
Where lives our sires' heroic tale!

The mossy pass, the mountain flood—
Still hallowed by the patriot's blood,—
The rocky cavern, once his tent,
And now his deathless monument,
Rehearsing to the kindling thought
What Faith inspired and Valour wrought!
Oh, ne'er shall he whose ardent prime
Was fostered in the freeman's clime,
Though doomed to seek a distant strand,
Forget his glorious native land—
Forget—'mid Brahma's blood-stained groves—
These sacred scenes of youthful loves!
Sequestered haunts—so still—so fair,
That holy Faith might worship there,
And Error weep away her stains,
And dark Remorse forget his pains
And homeless hearts by fortune tost,
Or early hopeless passion crost,
Regain the peace they long had lost!

Then let us roam that lovely land,
By classic Teviot's sylvan strand,
By Yair and Plora's pathless glens,
And haunted Yarrow's dreary dens,
Till, with far-circling steps we hail
Thy native B——t's broomy vale,
And reach my boyhood's birchen bowers
'Mong C——'s cottages and towers.

C——! like voice of years gone by,
I hear thy mountain-melody!—
It comes with long-forgotten dreams,
Once cherished by thy winding streams,
And sings of schoolboy rambles free,
And heartfelt young hilarity!
I see the moss-grown turrets hoar
Dim-gleaming on thy woodland shore,
Where oft, apart from vulgar eye,
I loved at summer-tide to lie,
Abandoned to the witching sway
Of some old bard's heroic lay,

Or poring o'er the immortal story
Of Roman and of Grecian glory.
Yet aye One Minstrel charmed me more
Than all I learned of classic lore,
Or war and beauty, gaily blent
In pride of knightly tournament,—
Even He, in rustic verse, who told
Of Scotland's champion—Wallace bold—
Of Scotland's ancient "luve and lee,"
And Southron's coward treachery!—
And oft I conned that harper's page
With old hereditary rage,
Till I have wept, in bitter mood,
That now no more in English blood
My country's faulchion might atone
The warrior's fall and widow's moan!—
Or, 'neath the oak's broad-bending shade,
With half-shut eye-lids musing laid,
Weaving in fancy's tissue strange
The shapeless visions of revenge,

I conjured back the past again—
The marshalled bands, the battle-plain,
The Border slogan's pealing shout,
The shock, the tumult, and the rout,
Victorious Scotland's bugle-blast,
And charging knights that hurry past;
Till down the dim-withdrawing vale
I seemed to see their glancing mail,
And hear the fleet barb's furious tramp
Re-echoed from yon ancient camp.

But, chief, when summer twilight mild
Drew her dim curtain o'er the wild,
I loved beside that ruin grey
To watch the fading gleam of day.
And though, perchance, with secret dread
I heard the bat flit round my head,
While winds that waved the long lank grass
With sound unearthly seemed to pass;
Yet with a pleasing horror fell
Upon my heart the thrilling spell;

For all that met the eye or ear
Was still so pure and peaceful here,
I deemed no evil might intrude
Within its sacred solitude.—
Still vivid memory can recall
The figure of each shattered wall;
The aged trees, all hoar with moss,
Low bending o'er the sullen fosse;
The rushing of the mountain flood;
The cushat's cooing in the wood;
The rooks that o'er the turrets sail;
The lonely curlew's distant wail;
The flocks that high on H——m rest;
The glories of the glowing west.

And, tinged with that departing sun,
To fancy's eye arises dun
A hill, along whose dusky brow,
Yet unprofaned by rustic plough,
The shaggy gorse and brown heath wave
O'er many a nameless warrior's grave.

—Yon peak, of yore, which wide and far
Gleamed like the wakeful eye of war,
And oft with warning flame and smoke,
Ten thousand spears to battle woke,
Now down each subject glen descries
Blue wreaths from quiet hamlets rise,
To where, soft fading on the eye,
Tweed's cultured banks in beauty lie,
Wide waving with a flood of grain
From Eildon to the eastern main.
—Oft from yon height I loved to mark,
Soon as the morning roused the lark,
And woodlands raised their raptured hymn,
That land of glory spreading dim;
While slowly up the awakening dale
The mists withdrew their fleecy veil,
And tower, and wood, and winding stream,
Were brightening in the golden beam.
—Yet where the westward shadows fell
My eye with fonder gaze would dwell,

Though wild the view, and brown and bare;
Nor castled halls, nor hamlets fair,
Nor range of sheltering woods, were there—
Nor river's sweeping pride between,
To give *expression* to the scene.
There stood a simple home,—where swells
The meadow sward to moory fells,—
A rural dwelling thatched and warm,
Such as might suit the upland farm.
A honeysuckle clasped the sash,
Half-shaded by the giant ash;
And there the wall-spread apple-tree
Gave its white blossoms to the bee,
Beside the hop-bower's twisted shade,
Where age reclined and childhood played.
Below, the silvery willows shook
Their tresses o'er a rambling brook,
That gambolled 'mong its banks of broom,
Till lost in L———'s haunted gloom.
—Methinks I hear its gurgling dash,
Beside yon sheltering clump of ash,

Which screens below the boiling pool
With pebbled bottom clear and cool,
Where often from the shelving brim
We launched on sedgy sheaf to swim.

From Teviot's lovelier dales remote
The traveller's glance would scarcely note
That narrow valley, or espy
Aught there to win his wandering eye;
But youthful memory pictures still
Each bush and stone that specked the hill;
The braes with tangled copsewood green
The mossy cliffs that rose between;
The fern that fringed each fairy nook;
The mottled mead; the mazy brook,
That underneath its osier shade
Still to the wild its music made.

Among the flowers and tedded hay
I see an elfin band at play;

Blithe swinging on the green-wood bough,
Or guiding mimic wain and plough;
Intent a summer booth to build,
Or tilling each his tiny field;—
Or, proudly ranged in martial rank,
They muster on the mossy bank,
With rushy helm and sword of sedge,
A bloodless Border war to wage.

Anon, with lapse of circling years,
In other guise that group appears,
As childhood's gamesome mood gives place
To manly thought and maiden grace.
Beneath yon rock with lichens hoar,
Of fabled fays the haunt of yore,
They sit beside the *Verter* spring—
I hear the low winds whispering
The mournful ballad's simple strain;
Or breathing flute awakes again
The echoes of each sylvan grot,
With many a sweetly-melting note.

Or, from the chambers of the north,
Comes Winter with his tempests forth?
Athwart the shivering glebe to fling
The flaky snow-drift from his wing,
Shrouding, with many a fleecy fold,
The bosky dell and battle wold—
While, banished from his half-ploughed field,
The hind essays the flail to wield,
And, o'er the hills, the perilous road
Alone by shepherd's foot is trode,
Who gathers on the furzy heath
His flocks dug from the smothering wreath—
Then it was more than joy to meet
With long-loved friends in that retreat—
And still that valley's rude recess
Could charm in winter's wildest dress—
Whether the mountain speat has drowned
With mingling floods the meadow ground,
And through their hundred sluices break
The headlong currents to the Lake,—

Or the choked torrent's deafened flow
Is hushed in crystal caves below,
And down the cliffs the trickling rills
Congeal in columned icicles.
But when day's hasty steps retire,
Still sweeter by the blazing fire
In that low parlour's narrow bound
To draw the social circle round;
Where no unwelcome step intrudes
To check gay humour's changeful moods.
Round flows the merry jest,—the tale
Of maiden cloister in the dale,
Of weeping spirit of the glen,
Of monster-snake of Wormeden;
Of ladies doomed by Rome's command
To sift the church-yard mound of sand,
By penance drear to wash away
Foul murder's dire anathema:
Or graver history's graceful page,
Or traveller's venturous toils engage;

Or poet's lay the bosom warms
With virtue's praise and nature's charms,
And faithful loves and feats of arms.
—And 'midst that friendly circle now
I mark a youth with open brow,
And thoughtful blue eyes beaming mild,
And temples wreathed with clusters wild
Of light brown hair!—The pensive grace
Upon his features, seems the trace
Of thought more tender and refined
Than dawns upon the vulgar mind;
But oft across his blooming cheek
Flushes a quick and hectic streak,
Like that which in an Indian sky,
Though cloudless, tells of danger nigh—
Danger—to tear from life and fame
The latest of a gentle name!

How fearful to affection's view
That blush more bright than beauty's hue!

Where, sad as cypress wreath, the rose
Amid consumption's ruin glows,
And decks with gay and treacherous bloom
The untimely passage to the tomb!—

Now scattered far the smiling flowers,
That grew around these rustic bowers—
Ungentle hearts and strangers rude
Have passed along its solitude:
The hearth is cold—the walls are bare
That heard my grandsire's evening prayer,—
Gone—even the trees he planted there!
Yet still, dear Friend, methinks 'twere sweet
To trace once more that loved retreat—
Still, there, where'er my footsteps roam,
"My heart, untravelled," finds a home!
For 'midst these Border mountains blue,
And vales receding from the view,
And lonely lakes, and misty fells,
Some nameless charm for ever dwells—

Some spirit that again can raise
The visions of departed days,
And thoughts unuttered—undefined—
That gleamed across my infant mind.
O lovely was the blest controul
Which came like music o'er my soul,
While there,—a rude untutored boy,
With heart tuned high to Nature's joy,—
Subdued by Beauty's winning form,
Or kindling 'midst the mountain storm,—
Alive to feeling's gentle smart,
Which wakes but does not waste the heart,—
I dreamt not of the workings deep
Of wilder passions yet asleep.—
Long from these native haunts estranged,
My home but not my heart is changed—
Amidst the city's feverish stir
'Tis still a mountain wanderer!
And though (if bodings be not vain)
Far other roamings yet remain,

In climes, where, 'mid the unwonted vales,
No early friend the wanderer hails,
Nor well-known hills arise to bless
His walks of pensive loneliness;
Yet still shall fancy haunt with you
These scenes beloved when life was new,
And oft with tender zeal return
By yon deserted tomb to mourn;—
For oh, whate'er that lot may be
In Fate's dark book reserved for me,
I feel that nought in later life,
Ambition's pride, or passion's strife,
Or favouring fortune's boundless grasp,
This bosom with a tie can clasp,
So strong—so sacred—as endears
These relics of our earliest years.

WAT O' THE CLEUCH.

CANTO FIRST.

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CANTO FIRST.

1.

WAT o' the Cleuch came down through the dale,
In helmet and hauberk of glistening mail;
Full proudly he came on his berry-black steed,
Caparisoned, belted for warrior deed.
O bold was the bearing, and brisk the career,
And broad was the cuirass and long was the spear,
And tall was the plume that waved over the brow
Of that dark reckless borderer, Wat o' the Cleuch.

2.

His housing, the buck's hide, of rude massy fold,
Was tasselled and tufted with trappings of gold;
The henchman was stalworth his buckler that bore;
He had bowmen behind him, and billmen before;
He had Bellenden, Thorleshope, Reddlefordgreen,
And Hab o' the Swire, and Jock of Poldean;
And Whitstone, and Halston, and hard-riding Hugh,
Were all at the back of bold Wat o' the Cleuch.

3.

As Wat o' the Cleuch came down through the dale,
The hinds stood aghast and the maidens grew pale,
The ladies to casement and palisade ran,
The vassals to loop-hole and low barbican,
And saw the bold borderers trooping along,
Each crooning his war-note or gathering-song:
O many a rosy cheek changed its hue
When sounded the slogan of Wat o' the Cleuch!

4.

As downward they passed by the Jed and the Roule,
The monk took his crozier, his cord, and his cowl,
And kneeled to the Virgin with book and with bead,
And said Ave-Maria and muttered his creed,
And loudly invoked, as he clasped the rood,
Saint Withold, Saint Waldave, Saint Clare, and Saint Jude!
He dreaded the Devil, to give him his due,
But held him as nothing to Wat o' the Cleuch.

5.

The abbot and monks of Jedwort well knew
When there was aught to gain,
That neither quoif, nor bead, nor book,
Nor penitential whine and look,
That stern marauder e'er would brook,
He spurned them with disdain:
That late at Elsdon he had been
On evening of Saint Valentine,

And there had wrought much wreck and dole,
Had called the abbot beast and fool,
And all his horde a nest of knaves,
Of sordid, selfish, venal slaves;
Had broke their croziers o'er their heads,
And burnt their books, and sowed their beads,
Taken, bot leave, their hoarded pelf,
And whatsoever pleased himself;
And never had sin of the deepest hue,
Nor Howard nor Scroop with their foraying crew,
E'er frightened our abbot like Wat o' the Cleuch.

6.

Wat o' the Cleuch he lighted down,
He knocked at the gate, but answer had none;
He knocked again with thundering din,
At length he heard a stir within.
"Who raps so loud?" a voice 'gan cry;
"Swith! open the door," said Wat, "'tis I."

Then some ran here and some ran there,
They whispered and muttered words of prayer:
" Come quick!" cried Wat, and then
The door was oped by an abbot old,
With bushy beard and ronkled mould,
Who scarce could tears restrain:
O how he groaned and heaved the sigh
As the stark and stalwart chief strode by;
And if his prayer then we knew,
'Twas not for grace to Wat o' the Cleuch.

7.

Wat deigned no heed, but onward strode
To the chancel of the house of God;
He threw up his visor and helm to boot,
He wiped his brow and he looked about,
And fixed his eye on where a crowd
Of haggard friars trembling stood;
Then in deliberate way

His mighty two-hand sword he drew;
'Twas broad and long, but of a hue
Ill suited fears to stay.
For segments deep of blackened red
Its polished side half covered,
As if half-way through many a head
It late had found its way.

8.

What frame might brook that weapon's fall!
For though the chief like oak was tall,
It reached so high, it swung so low,
It galled his shoulder and his toe;
And when that giant sword he drew
His arm was bent around his brow:
When forth it came, the sooth to say,
It came with such resistless sway—
Woe to the wight stood in its way!—
And flickered in the light of heaven
Like streamer of the burning levin.

9.

Wat drew that sword, I said before,
He gave it one brandish and no more;
It was enough—quick might you see
Each monk, each friar, on his knee,
Kissing the cross, and calling loud,
O mercy! mercy! spare our blood,
For sake of him that died on rood!

10.

Wat gave his sword a swing behind,
It whistled in the convent wind
With ireful sound, and by ill luck
Against the architrave it struck,
Just where Saint Peter held the key
Forth to the sainted Gregory.
Down came th' apostle from the wall,
The pope, the key, and pedestal.
Wat looked behind, he looked before,
And, prostrate on the convent floor,

Beheld the canonized compeers
Amid their rueful worshippers:
Longer the scene he could not brook,
He laughed till all the rafters shook.

11.

The grovelling monks upraised the head
Like martyrs rising from the dead;
Around they stared in dubious way,
And wist not what to think or say.
" Rise up, my friends—for friends we are,
Why thus give way to idle fear?
All that of you I crave
Is your best blessing—'tis a task
That you behoves—that boon I ask,
Ay, and that boon I'll have."
" That thou shalt have," the sire replied,
" My worthy son, thy country's pride,
In peace approved, in danger tried.

It well becomes the brave
To live, and walk thus holily:
Kneel down, Sir Knight, upon thy knee,
My blessing thou shalt have."

12.

" Beshrew thy heart!" said Wat in wrath,
" If that I do; for, in good faith,
Little I reck of idle breath,
Of mass or breviary;
Oft have I heard my grandam tell
When in our lady's gay chapelle
The consecrated torrent fell
From bedesman's hand on me,
How that I looked with such a frown,
As if I'd knock the dotard down
Who that unwelcome tide had thrown
So disrespectfully.
Ne'er since that day, when weetless, young,
God shield the right and ward the wrong!

Have I from priest or bedesman's tongue
Had benedicite.

13.

" But, sire, I crave and claim withal
A blessing more substantial;
Dost thou not see that my array
Has marched a rough and weary way,
Even from the Cleuch, since break of day?
No food nor fare for us is left,
The land is harried and bereft
So wholly by the Southern host
That now lies camped on Lothian coast,
That, save what sanctuary contains,
Nor flock, nor herd, nor store remains.
Now, abbot, thou mayest well perceive
The blessing which from thee we crave."

14.

" Forage! forage!" the abbot cried,
Glad so to 'scape was he;

Forth rushed the monks, and fast and wide,
Even to the Baillie's ingle side,
Carried their reavery.
Some came with bread, and some with ale,
Some came with butter, cheese, and kail,
And some with doughty cogs of brose,
The dole and dread of Scotland's foes!
And,—gladsome sight to warrior's eye,—
Came in the haggies, reeking high
In fair and full rotundity.
The Bull-trout, Pike, and Grayling blue,
The Salmon of the silvery hue,
With Wood-cock, Plover, and Curlew;
The Heath-fowl of the mountain high,
With downy leg and scarlet eye,
The Coney, Capercaile, and Hare,
And every forest bird was there;
With many snared the lakes among,
Numberless birds unknown to song,
If not to Bewick and Buffon.

15.

Such only may and will I note,
As suiteth rhythm, and rhyme and rote;
Such as the Grebe and Gullimote,
The Diver from Saint Mary's pool,
The Avoset and Galinule,
The Bilcock, Egret, Ruff, the Mew,
The Whimbrel, and the Heronsheugh,
The Stint, the Phalarope, and Tern,
The Mergenser and Midnight Hern,
The Dunlin, Wagel, Piper-cock,
The Shoveller or Kellutock,
The Imber, from broad Ale-more lake,
The Tarroch, Tough, and Kittiwake;
These all were got, and all brought there,
It suits not how, it boots not where.

16.

And there was kid from Cocket-dale,
And mutton from the banks of Kaile,

With head of ox, and ham of steer,
And rib of roe, and haunch of deer,
All placed before the mountaineer.

17.

Placed did I say? Yes, by the rood,
'Twas placed—but there not long it stood.
Vanished the beef with equal speed
As snow-ball tossed into the Tweed;
The forest fowls of flavour high
Faded in twinkling of an eye;
The mutton in a breath was gone,
Down went the sea-birds, skin and bone,
And of the haggies there was none.

18.

The monks stood by with silent gaze,
Gaping in token of amaze,
Till up spoke Halbert of the Swire,
A son that not disgraced his sire;

Of Harden's doughty race was he,
And thus he spoke full pleasantlie:
" What would you think, my master dear,
For me I judge it meet and clear
That we and ours should winter here?"
With stifled groans the friars shook,
Eye turned on eye with speaking look—
That jest their stomachs could not brook.

19.

" Yes," cried the chief, and, turning, said
To abbot John, who inly prayed,
" Your guerdon worse than that will be;
Father, I have not done with thee."
A sudden and a hectic glow
Soon faded on the abbot's brow,
Like that which dyes the mountain's form,
The prelude of descending storm;
Next a dim yellow o'er it swept,
The hair upon his temples crept;

Like abbot chiselled out of stone
He sat, all still and woe-begone,
While thus the Mountain Chief went on.

20.

" Father, thou knowest our mortal foe
Of late hath wrought us mickle woe,
Hath overrun the Border land
With fire, with foray, and with brand;
That still their bands are facing north,
And wasting even the shores of Forth,
While their huge stores the castle fill
Of Roxburgh, deemed impregnable;—
Could that by force or fraud be won,
Quick from our country they must run.
Though all unequal be the strife,
To win that place, for death or life,
Here am I come, right joyfully;
But much—nay all, depends on thee.

Either with warriors thou must wend,
Their motions guide, their strife attend,
Or teach to these, my friends, and me,
The whole cant of hypocrisy;
To con o'er chaplet, prayers to read,
To hand the chalice, book and bead;
Else as our leader thou art pledged,
For thou and thine are privileged."

21.

" In either case," the abbot said,
And as he spoke he shook his head,
" In either case, Sir Knight, for me
Full hard, I ween, the task will be.
Put off these weeds of warrior trim,
And don the cowl and sackcloth grim,
Thy panoply of steel resign,
That stark unyielding brigandine,
And when thou'rt clothed in weeds of woe
Soon will I tell thee, ay or no,

Whether with scrap of creed and mass
As genuine bedesman thou may'st pass."

22.

Off went the cuishes and the greaves,
Jangled aloud the chained sleeves,
Down went the helm and plumage tall,
The corslet rattles on the wall,
And Wat, whose very meed was scathe,
He felt so light and free to breathe,
That swift as fire he flew upon
A friar of stupendous bone,
To reave his robes in grappling strife—
Without a stir Wat hated life:
He caught the friar by the nape,
Who stared at first with ghastly gape;
But, pricked by pain, enroused by spleen,
Or memory what he once had been,

He struck the chief a blow so rude,
It made him stagger where he stood,
While mouth and nose gushed red with blood.

23.

The mountain warriors laughed outright,
The monks stood trembling with affright,
They knew not Wat's supreme delight;
Up to the sullen friar he came,
And asked his lineage and his name.
" What boots it you?" he stern replied,
And flung his cumbrous frock aside;
" Think'st thou I blench at mortal frown?
I'm neither come of thief nor loun,
And that is more, 'twixt you and I,
Than *some* can say without a lie."

24.

The dark chief gave delighted grin,
And wiped the blood-clots from his chin;

" Man, thou art brother of my heart,"
He said, " and hence we shall not part;
If thou not warrior turn with me,
I'll turn a saint and dwell with thee;
Or priest, or layman, friend, or foe,
I love a man can lend a blow.
Give me thy hand—beshrew my blood
If I could deem that 'neath a hood
Was brow so stern, or eye so dark,
Or heart so true, or arm so stark:
Lend me thy cowl and sober weed
Until my noviceship be sped."

25.

Now, gentle listener to my geste,
Restrain thy mirth if that thou mayest;
Ill suits it knight, or dame, or maid,
To laugh at truth when truth is said;
But sooth, such figure and such look
As Wat with crosier and with book,

Such rude unhypocritic mien,
No churchman's eye had ever seen;
And, when essaying prayer to read
On book, by him ne'er opened,
His uncouth air and voice of thundering,
Misnaming, crossing, mixing, blundering,—
No living man the scene could stand,
Each eye was shaded with the hand.

26.

"Now, by the heaven," said Abbot John,
"And all my hopes that hang thereon,
By every saint that churchman notes,
By all the souls of all the Scotts,
I swear—and soothly say to you,
Knight, this device will never do."
"We'll try once more," said Wat, "and then,"—
"No, Knight, I tell thee it is vain."

27.

"O Christ!" in grievous fret, cried Wat,
"The castle, Father, think of that!

That fortress might I win,
I would not scruple, no not I,
By night and day my task to ply
Until I learned the liturgy,
Each word and pause therein.
Trust me, to gain your privilege,
I would go on a pilgrimage,
With palmer's weed and niggard fare,
Even to the holy sepulchre;
And if with your assistance true
The place I win, I pledge to you
A warrior's word, a warrior's hand,
One half the spoil you shall command."

28.

" Say thou no more," the sire replied,
" Bold brother Hew shall be your guide;
And by my faith in Saint Mary,
I know not braver wight than he,

Nor one will risk such desperate game
For maid immured or winsome dame,
Or with such manhood work his way
When husbands, sires, and serfs way-lay.
At Nisbet, Holm, and Sorbytree,
Boonjeddwort, Nook, and Oxnam-lea,
Has Hew been caught and used full ill,
Yet brother Hew is living still;
His arm already have you tried,
And I should deem him trusty guide
As ever stepped on Border side:
Well thrive the progress and event!
One tenth the stores in Roxburgh pent
Would comfort much my friends and me,
And benefit our monastery.
God speed the mission! you shall want
No aid that Abbot John can grant."

END OF CANTO FIRST.

WAT O' THE CLEUCH.

CANTO SECOND.

WAT O' THE CLEUCH.

CANTO SECOND.

1.

NOW Wat o' the Cleuch's gone down the dale,
But he is not in hauberk or glistening mail;
Wat has not his hound, he has not his hawk,
His two-hand sword hangs not at his back;
But Wat and all the best of his train
Have frocks and cowls of murky grain,
Spear, axe, or hackbut, have they none,
But scymitar and habergeon.
O never were friars so stalwart to view
As Hab o' the Swire, and hard-riding Hugh,
And Whitston, and Halston, and Wat o' the Cleuch.

2.

Not grieved was Wat for his cap of steel,
Nor armour doffed from head to heel,
But sorely troubled was his mind
At leaving his good sword behind;
For oft had it stood him in good stead,
And he found he had left a friend indeed:
This noted his page, a trusty elf,
And thought and judged for himself.

3.

Away they went all brisk and hale
Down the beauteous links of Teviotdale;
Full soft and slowly passed they by
Where the towers of Roxburgh frowned on high
But there is one of the holy flock
Whose eye is never from the rock,
Who looks as if his soul were blent
With counterscarp and battlement.

4.

Un-noted all seven bowmen lay,
Resting upon the castle brae,
Who saw the monks pass slowly by,
And one that still upward turned his eye.
" Jesu !" cried one, with startled air,
" What mighty stalworth monk is there ?
Such form as that I never knew,
Save the moss-trooper, Wat o' the Cleuch."

5.

" Ah ! may our blessed Lady above,
And all the saints that sanctity love,
Curse, wreck, and overcome for ever,"
Said one, " that restless, ruthless reaver !
I would give all my father's land
To have him there so near at hand,
Within the range of this yew-bow's shot—
Shoot at the monk, he's but a Scot."

6.

The stout and stalworth monk, I ween,
Well heard the converse passed between;
For away he went with lengthened stride
Around the band to the farther side.
He had been taught the danger to know
Of feathered shaft from Southern bow,
And all too well the English knew
The figure and form of Wat o' the Cleuch.

7.

To Kelso they came, and welcome were they
To the abbot and monks of that abbaye;
For rich was the offering they brought in hand,
And they said it was spoil of Northumberland,
Which Scottish chief to the church had given,
To have his soul and conscience shriven
Of crime he did full sore repent—
Of murder and of ravishment.

8.

" Sooth," said the abbot, " it would be hard
If son repentant should be barred
For ever from the gate of heaven;
The generous chief shall be forgiven
Of all his crimes, whate'er the sum,
That is, or was, or is to come.
One single slight exception
I make from this remission,
And well I know that you'll approve
Of that I do in Christian love;
For my anathemas are laid
Against a thief so thorough sped,
That ne'er did warrior annals trace
Such path of guilt in human race:
At name of this stern heretic
Mercy recoils and grace grows sick;
For ruthless crimes of each degree,
For sacrilege and reavery,
His like the Border never knew;

A thief he is, and coward too,
God's adversary, Wat o' the Cleuch."

9.

The stalworth monk, that drooping stood
Beneath his frock and scalloped hood,
His tall gigantic form to hide,
Now forward stepped with maddened stride,
And, with his nostrils breathing ire,
Close to the abbot's cheek of fire,
" Thou dunghill mass of corruptness!
What devil in hell hath told thee this?"
This said he with such thunderous breath,
The abbot nigh had sunk beneath;
But off he sprung like terrier grim,
When greyhound with his length of limb
Comes deftly up, and unawares
Growls forth resentment in his ears.
Away he speeds, but turns again,
Preserved from danger by disdain,

And views with dark malicious eye
His tall indignant enemy;
So stood the priest, aghast and shrunk,
Gazing upon the hideous monk.

10.

But brother Hew, now Prior called,
The danger saw and was appalled;
Up to the monk he sped apace,
Scowled dark, and browed him face to face:
"Thou beast," he said, "thou dolt, for shame!
Disgrace of church and bedesman's name!
I knew some outrage thou would'st do,
But Father John would have it so;
Think, for a moment, think and rue,
For what you came and what is due."

11.

When Prior Hew this speech began,
The monk seemed waxing more than man;

Upstretched his form, his breath he drew,
His breast like chest of war-horse grew;
But noting Hew's well-feigned wrath,
His rage subsided, and his breath
Came sounding forth as violently
As winter blast on casement high.
One word there was, "*for what he came?*"
That was the word his pride to tame,
And low he bent, as if afraid
Of that was done and that was said.

12.

But those who tried that chief to cow
Had, by my say, too much ado;
Not brooking slight, or stern controul,
A flame impetuous was his soul,
And neither danger nor distress
Could that resistless flame suppress.
"Down on your knees," the prior said;
Reluctantly the Monk obeyed;

" Now first, repentant for all this,
The abbot's garment thou must kiss."
" Pah!" cried the monk, " out on such stain,"
And spit upon't, and spit again!

13.

All were amazed, the prior most,
Regretting all thus madly lost.
He seized the monk by force outright,
And called for help 'gainst maniac might;
But Wat's right humble holy weed
His wayward mood not lessened,
For though the friar at first hold
Bore down to earth his giant mould,
Like ocean-wave's indignant sway,
O'erwhelming bark that dares assay
To ride o'er its capacious breast,
So rose the chief above the priest.
But in the struggle them between
Both their broad scymitars were seen;—

Upraised the monks a hideous yell,
Toward the porch they rushed pell-mell,
Shrieking and shouting as they flew,
" Treason! Confusion! Wat o' the Cleuch!"

14.

Wat saw his folly all too late,
Like many a wight infuriate;
But instant danger then he knew
Hung o'er him and his motley crew:
" What have I done?" he cried, and then
Right through the crowd he dashed amain,
And in one moment took his stand
Within the porch with sword in hand;
" None move," he cried, " on pain of death,
Nor utter word above his breath!
Warriors, let none escape away,
And death to him that dares assay."

15.

The poor Cistertians to a cell
Were hurried down and guarded well,
And now the hardy mountaineer
The abbey holds without compeer.
But much the townsmen's wonder grew;
That visitants were there they knew,
Yet neither bustle rose, nor din,
And none went out, and none came in:
Paused, and stood still each passer-by
With thirsty ear and prying eye,
Till to a mighty crowd they grew—
Wat saw, and ill could brook the view.

16.

As in Dunedin streets, 'tis known,
Mine own right loyal worthy town,
If wight delighted 'gins to pry
With eager mien and curious eye,

Soon is he joined by great and small,
By burgess, bailiff, thieves and all,
By idle motley limbs of trade,
By beadle, beldame, matron, maid,
With gaping gaze and panting breast,
From north, and south, and east and west,
Till all the countless throng partake
Of looking on, for looking's sake.
Whate'er the object—'tis the same,
A thing of nought or thing of name,
A Highland troop of sorry cheer,
With naked thigh and bandilier;
A gallows thief, a deep divine,
A courtezan o'ercome with wine,
Or, haply, a right beauteous dame
With ancle trim and northern name;
If crowd is there, and that is known,
All is alike, I needs must own,
To mine own good romantic town.

17.

So happ'd it on the abbaye strand,
That night our chief held there command;
Wat saw them gather, list, and peep,
And cursed them in his heart full deep,
And rightly judged that they must ween
Some work of holy guise within.
Straight to the darksome cell he went,
Where praying, panting monks were pent;
" Haste, haste!" he cried, " note what I say,
It fits you quickly to obey:
Here is a sword, I must be brief;
If you have any small belief
That such can work your frames annoy,
Sing loud to God your strength with joy."
Rung forth the hymn from out the cell
With frantic but unsaintly swell,
" Louder!" cried Wat, " it is my will;"
Louder it swelled, and louder still;

The Kelso-men slunk all away,
They liked not much to hymn and pray,
Nor like they't much unto this day.

18.

The Prior Hew on errand is gone,
The scheme, the message, was his own,
And thus far deftly gained he
Of the Governor, Sir Guy De Lis,
That he and two more monks should win
Vespers to read that night within
The fortress, as arrear of sin;
And grant remissions for reaver deed,
Of which the soldiers stood much need.
Sir Guy despised, as well he might,
This ghostly fraud, yet would not slight
The bedesmen's art, for well he knew
What in emergence they could do;
For they had proved, not long ago,
A powerful friend and deadly foe.

19.

The shades of eve in softest hue
Began to tint the Cheviot blue,
But a darker, gloomier veil was wore
On the swarthy brows of Lammermore!
While in the vale stood these between
Dun Ruberslaw and Eildon green,
One coned with rock, one cleft in three,
Like ancient dome and monastery
That for due penance, praise, and shrift,
Their unassuming heads uplift,
In midst of mighty city's bound
With towers and ramparts circled round.

20.

The Tweed ran slow, the Tweed ran deep,
Till round the abbaye making sweep,
It sung so loud and so harsh a note,
That it made Wat remember well
A tale he scarce had e'er forgot,
Of his own grandsire, Michael Scott,

And the three dargsmen, fiends of hell,
Who stemmed that mighty torrent's sweep,
And dammed that pool so broad and deep;
And he saw the gap stand to that day
From which the elves were scared away:
A chillness crept o'er all his frame,—
It could not be that warlock theme,
But feeling scarce to minstrel known—
A dreaming, mixed sensation
Of things at hand, and things of yore,
For a bloody night lay him before!

21.

Now it behoved the Prior Hew,
Who framed the plot, to chuse forth two,
And only such he needs must have
As were obsequious and brave.
Wat loved the one term from his soul,
The other made him fret and scowl,

But Hew's fair choice he must abide;
Forth stood they, ranked on either side,
And after pause and scrutiny,
" Hab of the Swire, I must have thee,
For thou can'st read the breviary."

22.

Wat found all chance was o'er for him,
His cheek turned to a crimson grim
As he to calculate began
On full frustration of his plan;
Till up came Prior Hew apace,
And surlily looked in his face:
" Though thou can'st neither read nor pray,
And scarce can'st word sagacious say,
And haply art but middling brave,
Yet, for good trial, thee I'll have;
One trusty friend I shall not lack
When Wat o' the Cleuch is at my back."

" Bravo!" cried Wat, with voice as loud
As thunder from the yawning cloud;
" Bravo! my brother of the field!
There shall be skelps or we three yield!"
Then strode he o'er the chancel floor
With step of such gigantic power,
That at each stride, as I heard tell,
The monks believed within their cell
That dreadful weight from casement fell.

23.

The night full dark and murky fell,
Slow tolled the convent evening bell,
As o'er the Tweed went Prior Hew,
And Habby Scott, and Wat o' the Cleuch,
To shrive the English bands intent—
But their last shrift was fully meant.
Jock Jardine younger of Poldean,
And Rutherford of Redfordgreen,

Brought down the warriors from the braes
Through night, and unfrequented ways;
One cowled warrior staid behind
To guard the monks in cell confined,
The rest had all their parts assigned.

24.

Ye beauteous dames of merry England,
When you this tale shall read,
Well may you quake for your good band,
That guarded Tweed and Teviot's strand.
And barriers of Northumberland,
From reavers' ruthless deed.
And well this thought might you beseem,
" O that some voice to wizard's dream,
Or whisper from the Teviot's stream,
Would warn them in such need!"
Dread not, fair dames, for the event;
Neither in camp nor tournament,

Shall English might by foeman shent
Be boasted as his meed.
Haply some tale would better suit
Thy fancy and thy wish to boot,
Like that which happ'd on Durham field,
Which Durham maids and dames beheld,
To whom a grateful sacrifice
Was Sir John Copland's royal prize,
Or Pembroke's raid full long agone,
Or rueful hapless Homeldon;
But can'st thou of a minstrel ask
Such humbling, such ungrateful task?
No—free as stag on Border height,
As falcon or as eagle's flight,
Free as the summer's cloudless breeze,
Or bird that swims the polar seas,
From matron's say, or man's behest,
Flow forth, flow unconstrained my geste!

END OF CANTO SECOND.

WAT O' THE CLEUCH.

CANTO THIRD.

WAT O' THE CLEUCH.

CANTO THIRD.

1.

OLD Roxburgh, oft thy halls of yore
Rang to the war and wassail lay,
As oft thy clanging trumpet bore
Loud watch-word to the Border gray;
And many a song and legend tell
To mountain hind and wondering dame,
Of doughty deeds that there befell,
And of that perilous citadel
That force alone might claim.

Low lie thy mighty ramparts now,
Of many a hero's dust the shrine;
And o'er them, as in triumph, grow
The spleenwort and the murky sloe,
The bramble, moss, and mistletoe,
Their gloomy hues entwine.

2.

But, Roxburgh, who of Border blood
Can o'er thy mouldering turrets tread,
Can stand where his forefathers stood,
And smile where erst those fathers bled,
Nor for the mighty honoured dead
Feel the heart-stirrings of acclaim?
If such there is, this be his meed:—
No trophy ever wait his name;
On him may never beauteous dame
Of Teviot smile; and when is run
The last tide through his soul-less frame,
Then ne'er may vassal, dame, or son,

Wail for the heartless wight thus gone
Loaded with minstrel's malison!

3.

But there were times, when he whose hand
Upheld thy dreaded proud command,
Stood much in need of courage high,
Of jealous mind, and watchful eye;
And such well proven was Sir Guy.
That night he sat in Roxburgh tower
With many a knight and squire around,
Unweeting all of hostile power,
And loudly swelled the revel sound:
For on that good old Border day
They lacked not oft, as I heard say,
Good beer, and wine, and usquebhae.

4.

" A song!" cried Howard, " and by name,
I call Edward of Walsinghame,

Whom I invoke by game and glee,
For lay he sings most pleasantlie."
" Sooth, my good lords," said Walsinghame,
" Well wot you of my minstrel fame,
To all my lays I put one strain,
As well to sacred as profane,
Nor have I more—but I can tell
What lay would please Lord Howard well:
Still will he urge it, right or wrong,
Though decency forbids the song.
My lords, I'll put you in amaze,
Wot you what Lady Howard says?"

5.

Howard looked sulky and chagrined,
His head on clenched fist he leaned,
For sooth he felt the jest would come
Too near his heart, too near his home,
Had not then chanced to enter in
The holy men to shrive of sin.

" Ah!" whispered one, not as in jest,
" Does good Lord Howard need the priest?"
" No, by my fay," said Walsinghame,
" It is not Howard, but his dame."
Straight words were said unmeet to tell,
And hand on hilt of broad-sword fell;
But every voice 'gan to prolong
In louder key, " The song! the song!"
" Yes," said Sir Guy, " that song we'll have
Of beggarly moss-trooper knave,
That merry song, which well you wot,
Of greedy, lean, and mangy Scot."—

Walsinghame's Song.

1.

O HEARD ye never of Wat o' the Cleuch?
The lad that has worrying tikes enow,
Whose meat is the moss, and whose drink is the dew,
And that's the cheer of Wat o' the Cleuch.

Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Woe's my heart for Wat o' the Cleuch!

2.

Wat o' the Cleuch sat down to dine
With two pint stoups of good red wine;
But when he looked they both were dry;
Oh, poverty parts good company!
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
O for a drink to Wat o' the Cleuch!

3.

Wat o' the Cleuch came down the Tyne,
To woo a maid both gallant and fine;
But as he came o'er by Dick o' the Side,
He smelled the mutton and left the bride.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
What think ye now of Wat o' the Cleuch?

4.

Wat o' the Cleuch came here to steal,
He wanted milk, and he wanted veal;
But ere he wan o'er the Beetleston brow
He houghed the calf and eated the cow!
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Well done, doughty Wat o' the Cleuch!

5.

Wat o' the Cleuch came here to fight,
But his whittle was blunt, and his nag took fright,
And the braggart he did what I dare not tell,
But changed his cheer at the back of the fell.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
O for a croudy to Wat o' the Cleuch!

6.

Wat o' the Cleuch kneeled down to pray,
He wist not what to do or say;

But he prayed for beef, and he prayed for bree,
A two-hand spoon and a haggies to pree.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
That's the cheer for Wat o' the Cleuch!

7.

But the devil is cunning as I heard say,
He knew his right, and hauled him away!
And he's over the Border and over the heuch,
And off to hell with Wat o' the Cleuch.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Lack-a-day for Wat o' the Cleuch!

8.

But of all the wights in poor Scotland,
That ever drew bow or Border brand,
That ever drove English bullock or ewe,
There never was thief like Wat o' the Cleuch.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Down for ever with Wat o' the Cleuch!

6.

Loud laughed the chiefs, but were annoyed
By the three monks that stood aside;
Struggling they seemed and sore aghast,
And two still held the other fast.
" Your pardon, Knights," said Prior Hew,
" I grieve for stir where honour's due,
But this poor brother, by God's will,
With fits like this is troubled still."
" De Gray," said Guy, who noted then
Three monks of such unsaintly mien,
" De Gray, lead these to Colbert's cell,
And see them stripped and searched well;
Nay, hold—much need have we to care,
Search them before me where they are."

7.

Short breathed the monks, and 'gan to feel
Beneath their gowns for hilt of steel,

And stood up grimly by the wall—
It was a moment critical!
In posture that bespoke the mind,
With foot advanced, and arm behind,
With floating gowns of sackcloth grey,
And eyes bent forward on their prey,
There the redoubted bedesmen stood,
Panting like wolves that thirst for blood.

8.

But chiefly he of giant mien,
That stood the other two between,
Stooped onward with such dire intent
As if each nerve were strained and bent,
Like dog that notes on green-sward lone
The burrowing moldwarp's heaving cone,
Stands all intent his skill to try,
With turned-up ear and steadfast eye,
With starting frame, and lifted foot,
In guise most wistfully acute,

Seeming the hair-breadth time to know
When he must spring on weetless foe—
As staunch, as steady, and as true,
Stood the dark reaver, Wat o' the Cleuch.

9.

To call his serfs forth stepped De Gray,
His captain's orders to obey;
But at that moment rose a yell
Of dire alarm—loud rung the bell,
The trumpet sounded, and a rout
Was heard around, within, without!
All in amazement looked around,
And straight to quit the hall were bound,
When cautious Guy called them to stay
And seize the monks whate'er the fray.

10.

That was the word of fear and scathe,
The word of tumult, broil, and death:

" Hurra!" cried Wat, and onward flew
Like fire-brand that outwings the view,
And at Sir Guy he made a blow
That fairly cleft that Knight in two;
Then Walsinghame he turned upon,
And pinned him through the shoulder-bone
Against the pavement, and the while,
Half said, half sung, with grizly smile,
" Out, songster, with thy chorus true,
What think ye now of Wat o' the Cleuch?"
" Ah! ruffian, ah!—for shame! for shame!"
Were the last words of Walsinghame.

11.

Through toil, through terror, and through blood,
Like stayless burst of mountain flood,
Wat bore before him all outright,
For battle was his sole delight:
Stout Prior Hew was sore bested,
For whiles he fought and whiles he fled,

But aye, whene'er he aim'd a blow,
Not farther pressed his fated foe.
Right sore it grieveth me to tell
What to brave Halbert Scott befell:
Hard was he set, as well might be,
For still they fought it one to three;
No buckler bound was on his wrist,
No cuirass on his manly breast,
Though strong his arm, it was foreworn,
And to the wall his back was borne.

12.

Wat saw his danger, and amain
Flew to his aid, but flew in vain;
For with such fury fell his stroke,
That from the hilt his broad-sword broke:
"Wo worth thy dwarf and dirty blade,
And forge where such a thing was made!"
Cried Wat, "Oh for my friend in need,
Now do I lack my sword indeed!

Lay on them, cousin !—bravely done !
Down with the dastards one by one !"
This said, he griped a Southron fast,
And held him firm before his breast,
As shield 'gainst many a coming blow
That slew the friend but not the foe :
His sword secured, he threw him then
With dash among the Englishmen ;
Then after him impetuous flew,
Crying, " That's the cheer for Wat o' the Cleuch."

13.

Four only now remained alive,
Who, deeming it unmeet to strive,
Made for the door through kinsmen's blood,
But Prior Hew before them stood ;
Scarce could he Mary's name have said
Ere all the four were grovelling laid.
Of all the chiefs remained not one,
Nor knew their troops of what was done ;

And when the Scots first paused and thought,
And saw the ruin that was wrought,
They stood and gazed in silence on,
Scarce trowing what themselves had done.

14.

" Now by the might of Michael Scott,"
Said Wat, " though I full oft have fought,
And changed with Southrons many a blow,
I ne'er got full revenge till now."
" Ah, my brave chief!" said Hab, " I fear
That this deray will cost you dear;
Would that my brother John were here!"
He staggered, sunk, no more he said,
With the next breath, 'mong foemen laid,
His great and gallant spirit fled.

15.

The Borderer could not this withstand,
He took the dead man by the hand—

" Ah, Hab !" he sighed, " long will it be
Ere I find right-hand man like thee !
Sore will I miss thy arm of might
Before the break of morning light,
And, reft of stay so firm and true,
I may be then as thou art now ;
But if I live—by Saint Marye,
By all the love I bore to thee,
Thy death shall well revenged be !"

16.

Still the alarm without was dire,
The town by that time was on fire,
Which Wat's ungracious page had done,
An imp's unbidden act,
Who weened that such confusion
The Southrons might distract ;
But those who knew the elfin, said
More selfish aim the action swayed,

As you shall hear anon;
Howe'er it was, the Southrons ran
Forth from the gate when it began,
To help or to look on;
And when our bedesmen issued out,
Well armed now from head to foot
With sword, with spear, and shield to boot,
There but themselves were none.
Save by fair dames, full sore amazed,
From bartizan and tower that gazed,
Unchallenged they passed up and down,
And blessed the hand that fired the town.

17.

When to the gate of keep they past,
They found it closed and bolted fast,
Yet none remained within but they,
Save women weak and chaplain gray;
But through the outer court they saw
A troop that toward them did draw,

Though noise they heard not, near nor far,
Of clash of arms or shout of war.

18.

In darkness deep to posts they win,
With light without but none within,
Resolved the comers to astound,
And with their lances safely wound.
Soon oped the gate with thundering jar,
Entered the careless men of war;
But straight the foremost, with a yell,
Reeling recoiled, and groaned and fell:
Forward they pressed, but what defence
From wounds that came they knew not whence?
The way was strait—in heaps they fell,
By whom, or how, they could not tell.
Some called out "Treason," some "Sir Guy,"
Some Howard, Scroop, and Barnaby;
But lord or leader came not near,
They would not heed or did not hear;

And ne'er had terror and dismay
O'er warrior troop such ample sway,
As through the court their flight they wing
To sound the alarm and gathering.

19.

But all the tumults ever seen
At Roxburgh gate since it had been,
Were trivial to the clash and clang
That now before the castle rang.
Down came the warriors of the Cleuch,
In foray, feud, or battle true,
With glancing swords and plumes of white,
Dancing and flickering through the night
Like the bog-meteors, darkly seen
By moorland tarn or mountain green,
That spread, that quiver, and retire,
Things half of mist and half of fire;
So came the mountain warriors nigh,
Bedimming sight to foeman's eye.

20.

Swift, steady, silent, and profound,
They came—save that a cluttering sound
Would sometimes whisper in the gale,
To listener's ear unwelcome tale.
Like dark descent of winter snow
That down the night sublimely slow
Steals on the earth with silent pace,
Heaping and smothering Nature's face;
Yet sometimes burst of pattering hail
Will trembling shepherd's ear assail;
Loud bursts the wind, the storm is hurled
Wide o'er a pale and prostrate world;
As still, as threatful, down they drew,
As loud, as furious, on they flew,
The baited warriors of the Cleuch.

21.

Wat heard the slogan, and his heart
Leaped at the sound; up did he start

With maddened motion, quite the same
As if his tall gigantic frame
Had been machine, that battle knell
Could set, and keep in movement well.
He set his limbs, his sword he swung,
With smothered shout from pavement sprung,—
Whistled his weapon through the air,
For foes were none his blows to bear;
And scarce could Hew the knight restrain
From dashing 'mid his foes amain,
Though in the court of Scots were none,
And he 'mong thousands all alone.
But as more loud the conflict grew,
Up to the battlements he flew,
And shouted out, with voice as full
And fury-toned as mountain bull,
"On, kinsmen, on!—ye are the men!
Lay on them, Dicky of Bellenden,

Christy of Thorleshope!
Sim of the Brae!
Rutherford! Rutherford!
Hie to the fray!
Huh! for the battle, lads,
Hurra! hurray!"

22.

But sorely did the Southrons gall
The Scotsmen from the outer wall,
And brave De Gray, with ready mind,
Sent round an ambush them behind;
Then, grievous sight for Wat to see!
He saw his warriors turn and flee.
Down went the draw-bridge,
The gates up flew,
Forth rushed the English
To waste and pursue
Those darkling marauders,
The men of the Cleuch.

23.

Wat broke away, restraint was none,
And left Hew in the tower alone,
Who barred the gate; full safe was he,
But sore was Wat in jeopardy!
No stop his ardent way might cross,
He dropped the wall, he swam the fosse,
And though in heavy armour bound,
Led by the noise, the fight he found;
Back where the Teviot made a sweep
Around the vale both broad and deep.
Where none could take them in the rear,
His gallant warriors halted were,
With their enraged foes to strive,
Although they scarce were one to five.

24.

The first attack on his array
Was o'er ere Wat came to the fray;

But when they saw his boardly frame,
And heard his voice, and heard his name,
Such shout broke on the midnight gale
As ne'er astounded Border dale.
" Hie on them, lads! be yare, be yare,
The castle's mine, our friends are there!"
He cried, and dashed on circle deep
Like lion on a herd of sheep;
But at each first or second stroke
Short in his hand his weapon broke.
So great his might, no common glaive
Could stand the blows in ire he gave;
Still was he thus forced back to fly,
Cursing the weapons violently;
His might more evil did than good,
For backward, close unto the flood,
Was borne his small but firm array,
And worse than doubtful was the fray.

25.

An elf came up by Teviot stream,
Moving beneath a mighty beam,
Who all the while right deftly plied
With ready hand, from pouch on side,
Eating sweet cake, delightful meed!
From burning shop-board pilfered.
Ah, 'tis an imp both staunch and true,
The little page of Wat o' the Cleuch!
Behind the ranks he pressed along,
Nor once was noted in the throng
Till close up to his master's side,
When thus he spoke with crabbed pride:
"Here's for ye, Cleuch—de'il that ye be
As tired of that goad as me."
"Ah, bravest boy of mountain birth!
My own good sword, by heaven and earth!"
Cried Wat, and as he drew it out,
Scarce earthly was his joyous shout;
"Huh! for the battle, kinsmen true,

Hie on the tikes! give hell its due!
Now for the cheer of Wat o' the Cleuch!"

26.

What bard may sing of that assail?
Off went the Southron heads like hail!
Not one by one, nor two by two,
But in whole files he laid them low.
As well might field of thistles stand
Against the might of mower's hand,
As any armed Southron crew
The two-hand sword of Wat o' the Cleuch.
Some said, but sure, I wot, in jest,
That when full rank was not abreast,
Then, ere the weapon's swing was sped,
Sometimes it severed kinsman's head:
Howe'er it was, that weapon's sway
Opened through serried ranks a way;
They rallied, wheeled, and closed amain,
Again it broke them, and again:

Like wedge of steel through pine-tree driven,
Like comet through the stars of heaven,
That little troop of warriors true
Pressed onward after Wat o' the Cleuch.

27.

When first arose the slogan's yell
The stag awoke on Bowmont fell;
Listening he paced around the hind,
His nostrils whistled in the wind;
Something so dread was in the strain,
That night he couched not down again;
But just as o'er the ocean flood
The doubtful light began to brood,
He saw by every glen and brae,
The flyers posting south away,
Urging their flight through holt and wood,
By furious Scotsmen close pursued;

Away, o'er Border height and vale,
Onward he clove the morning gale,
And sought the depth of Otterdale.

28.

Not to that wight my rede I say,
Nor knight renowned, nor lady gay,
Who cannot frame in mind full well,
Unless that wayworn minstrel tell,
The battle's fate, what sprung from thence,
Each fair and obvious consequence;
How the huge stores of Roxburgh fell
To one who knew their value well;
What wealth the monks of Jedwort won,
How sore they rued ere all was done;
How the invading Southron host
Fled in dismay from Scotland's coast;
And how the king, for deeds of weir,
Heaped honours on our mountaineer.

Who reads must frame, who reads not may,
I chuse not lengthen out my lay.

END OF WAT O' THE CLEUCH.

THE STRANGER.

THE STRANGER;

BEING

A FURTHER PORTION

OF

The Recluse, a Poem.

FAIR was the scene and wild—a lonely tarn
Lay bosomed in the hill, and it was calm
As face of slumbering childhood—yea, so calm
That magic mirror of the mountain reign
Was spread, that vision scarcely could discern
The water from the land, or rightly mark
The greensward patch, the hazel bush, the rock,
From those fair copies on the element,

The shadow from the substance—save that one
Was softer and more delicately green.

A traveller came along—tall was his steed,
And rich that steed's caparison—but he,
The rider, was a man uncouth to view;
For his attire was not like other men's:
His beard was all untrimmed, and his fair locks
Seemed tanned by suns and bleached by the rain;
The sweltered tufts had hung from year to year,
Nor had the spikes of disentangling comb
Scared their inhabitants—A man he was
Regardless of the world and the world's scorn.
Red was the corner of his eye, and yet
It seemed to beam a glance of living flame;
A ray scarce earthly hung upon its sphere;
A spark was lurking there, which, just as chanced,
The substance that enkindled it would show
The fiend or cherub.—On that traveller came,

Slow and indifferent—solemn were his thoughts,
Determined but astray—still from his breast
Issued a hollow sound like one who prayed
Or sung some holy hymn, but still his eye,
His red and troubled eye, turned ruefully,
(Mixed with a nameless feeling of delight),
Upon that peaceful solitary lake.
Ah, did he deem he saw pourtrayed there
A vision of that distant future world
To which the yearning soul so fondly clings?
And did he ween that beauteous baseless shade
An emblem of that long eternity
So shaped to human longings?—Righteous One!
That ever eye that gazes on thy works
Should on the soul such motley visions fling!
Slow past he on, and still the solemn sound
Flowed from his breast, although his lips not moved.

A boy came from the mountains, tripping light
With basket on his arm—and it appeared

That there was butter there, for the white cloth
That over it was spread, not unobserved,
In tiny ridges gently rose and fell,
Like graves of children covered o'er with snow;
And by one clumsy fold the traveller spied
One roll of yellow treasure, all as pure
As primrose bud reflected in the lake.
" Boy," said the Stranger, " wilt thou hold my steed
Till I walk round the corner of that mere?
When I return I will repay thee well."
The boy consented—touched his slouching hat
Of broad unequal brim with ready hand,
And set his basket down upon the sward.

The traveller went away—but ere he went
He stroaked his tall brown steed, and looked at him
With kind, but yet not unregretful eye.
The boy stood patient—glad was he to earn
The little pittance—well the stripling knew

Of window in the village, where stood ranged
The brown and tempting cakes—well sprinkled o'er
With the sham raisin and deceitful plum,
And, by corporeal functions swayed, his mind
Forestalled the luxury with supreme delight.

Long, long he patient stood—the day was hot,
The butter ran in streamlets, and the flies
Came round in thousands—o'er the horse's head
A moving, darkening canopy they hung,
Like the first foldings of the thunder-cloud
That, gathering, hangs on Bowfell's hoary peak.

The Stranger came not back;—the little boy
Cast many a wistful look—his mind was mazed,
Like as a brook that travels through the glade,
By complicated tanglement involved,
Not knowing where to run—and haply he
Had sunk inert—but that in patience—or

Perhaps incited by a curious mind,
He cast his eyes to east, and west, and north,
But nothing save the rocks, and trees, and walls,
(Of gray stones built, and covered on the top
Sheep-fold-wise, with a cope of splintered flags,
That half-diverging stood upon their edge
And half-reclining lay), came in the range
Of his discernment—some full bitter tears
At length came flowing down the poor boy's cheek.

The steed was all impatience—high his head,
And higher still his ears were reared aloft;
For his full eye (nigh blinded by a shade
Of stubborn leather—a half round it was,
In shape like to the holy moon, when she
Glides o'er the midnight heaven on silent foot,
When half her course and some few stages more
Already has been run) that eye was fixed
On a huge stone, that on the mountain lay

Like dome of eastern temple, or the mosque
Where pagans worship—Loudly did he neigh;
For he mistook it for a gallant steed
Feeding in peaceful quiet—while, alas!
He was compelled to stand upon the road
Held by a fretful boy the live-long day.
His fore-hoof, mailed with an iron shell
That shone like silver, fiercely did he strike
Against the sounding earth—Up rose the dust
And fire withal, like to the smouldering smoke
And flash, that rises from the evening gun
Of perverse hind, that in concealment lies
To watch the timid hare—relentless sport!
And then his tail, which farrier's hand obscene
Had rudely mauled, and sore curtailed withal,
And by incision cruel, and the help
Of pullied cords, made that point up to heaven
Which God ordained should hang towards the earth
With graceful sweep—O shame! that impious man
Should in unrighteous pride thus lay exposed

Unto the stifled winds and eye of day
What nature meant to hide!—This tail was heard
Whistling across the ambient air, with sound
Of blasting wrath, loud as the choral hymn
Of mountain spirit, when by fits he sings
The prelude of the storm within the caves
Of grey Helvellyn—loudly wept the boy,
And much he feared; for oft that angry steed
Turned round his head with such precipitance
To dash the insects from his glossy side,
That the poor boy in veriest danger stood
To have his brains knocked out; yet still he kept
His hold though sore beset.—At length he heard
A voice rise from the bosom of the hill,
Or from the heart of that small peaceful lake,
He knew not which—it broke along the air
That wandered o'er that slumbering solitude
With such a solemn and impressive tone,
That not though heaven in distant thunder had
Spoke words of human breath, could these so much

he heart of man have shook, and all his powers
› utterly astounded.—On it came
'ith gathering boom—loud and more loud it came,
nd passing, died upon the trembling wind,
r crept into the silence of the hill,
ike startled spirit, and was heard no more!
was a beetle—somewhere it had been
t elvish carol on that mountain's breast,
r haply dancing with the daffodils,
'pon the margin of that lovely lake
'cleped a tarn or water—or mayhap
rom dwelling 'mid the maze of glow-worm lamps
hat with faint radiance gild the earthly woods,
Vhen dews fall soft and nature lies reposed,
'roud of the rayless halo round them shed,
Vhich only lights that one particular leaf
n which the parent hangs, like a small gem
Jpon the lap of night. The boy held in
lis breath for full five seconds—then again
'oured forth the bray of agony: the night

Fell dark and deep—the moon was not in heaven
But lingering in the domes beneath the world,
(As weens the hind), throwing her yellow light
Far up the steep, on trees, and pendant hills,
But to that poor distressed, perplexed boy,
As if she had not been.—The horse went round
Most unrespective, and, not satisfied
With whisking his dark tail in furious guise,
He broke on all propriety with snort
Like blustering cannon, or the noise that bursts
From heaven in thunder through the summer rain.
The boy was stunned—for on similitude
In dissimilitude, man's sole delight,
And all the sexual intercourse of things,
Do most supremely hang.—The horse went round,
Jerked with his nose, and shook his harness so
The boy waxed desperate, and—O impious elf!
He cursed that hungry beast—the horse went round,
And round, and round; and pulling in his head
To his fore-pastern, upward made it spring

So forcibly, the poor boy's feeble arm
Was paralyzed—his hold he lost—and off
Like lightning flew the steed, that never more
Was in these regions seen!—Some did report,
Though, I believe, the tale was all untrue,
That a right wayward bard, whom I regret
As having left these mountains, where alone
True genius uncontaminate can thrive,
Was seen cantering through Chester on that horse;
And others, that he afterwards became
The horse of a strange youth, not unrenowned
In early life, who undertook the charge
Of chaplain to a military troop,
Cheered by the Highland bagpipe and the drum.

No more the poor boy cried—he lifted up
His basket from the earth into the air,
That unviewed element that circumfolds
The earth within its bosom, there he felt
With his left-hand how it affected was

By the long day and burning sun of heaven.
It was all firm and flat—no ridges rose
Like graves of children—basket, butter, cloth,
Were all one piece coherent.—To his home
The boy returned right sad and sore aghast.

No one believed his tale—they deemed it was
A truant idler's story, in excuse
Of charge neglected.—Days and months past on,
And all remained the same—the maidens sung
Along the hay-field—at the even-tide
The dance and merriment prevailed—the sky
Was pure as heretofore—the mid-day winds
Arose and ruffled all the peaceful lake,
The clouds of heaven past over—nature all
Appeared the same as if that stranger wight
Had never been—save that it was observed
That Daniel Crosthwaite, who, beside the tarn,
From good Sir William rented a few fields,
Appeared at church with a much better hat

Than he was wont, for it was made of down
That by the broad Ontario's shores had grown
On the sleek beaver—on his window too
A book one day was seen, and none could tell
How it came there—it was a work in the
French tongue, a novel of Voltaire—these things
Were noted, whispered, and thought of no more.

Late did I journey there with bard obscure
From Scotland's barren wastes—barren alike
Of verdure, intellect, and moral sense,—
To view that lonely tarn.—He too was there,
The changeful and right feeble bard now styled
The Laureate—he too of the Palmy Isle,
The man of plagues, horrors, and miseries,
Disgrace of that sweet school, that tuneful choir
Named from these peaceful waters—he who framed
An imitation of that lay divine
Which is inimitable.—Not inept,
Our conversation ran on books and men:

The would-be songster of the Scottish hills,
In dialect most uncouth and language rude,
Lauded his countrymen, not unrebuked,
Reviewers and reviewed, and talked amain
Of one unknown, inept, presumptuous bard,
The Border Minstrel—he of all the world
Farthest from genius or from common sense.
He too, the royal tool, with erring tongue,
Backed the poor foolish wight, and uttered words
For which I blushed—I could not choose but smile.
" Yet," said I, tempted here to interpose,
" You must acknowledge this your favourite
Hath more outraged the purity of speech,
The innate beauties of our English tongue,
For amplitude and nervous structure famed,
Than all the land beside, and therefore he
Deserves the high neglect which he has met
From all the studious and thinking—those
Unswayed by low caprices of the age,
The scorn of reason, and the world's revile."

More had I said derisive—yes, by Heaven!
Much more I would have said, but that just then
He of the Palms with startled eye looked round,
And such an eye, as any one may guess
To whom that eye is known—for he beheld
What I yet shudder to define.—"Great God!"
The youth exclaimed, "see what is lying there!"
He of the laurel, who was next to him,
Nay, haply nigher to the shore than he,
Stared in amaze, but he can nothing see;
And in his haste, instead of looking down
Into the water, he looked up to heaven;—
A most preposterous habit, which the bard
Practises ever and anon—I looked
Into the peaceful lake, and there beheld
The bones of one who once in mortal life
Had lived and moved—a human skeleton!
I may not say what horrors shook my frame!
The bones seemed loose, nor film nor ligament
Bound them together, yet each one maintained

Its proper place, as loath to break the mould
In which a human soul once householded.
It was a ghastly sight!—where once the heart
Of feeling and of passion played, or beat
With ardent throb, lay the dark filmy mud
That gathers in the deep, and on the bones
Appeared thin soapy spots of greenish hue;
The jaws upon the nape-bone had fallen down,
The scull seemed looking up—there had he died!
His back upon the sand, his face to heaven!

My mind, borne on the influence of truth,
Turned instantly upon the poor boy's tale.
Rightly I judged, for there indeed we saw
All that remained of him, the stranger wight,
That lonely wanderer of the mountain reign.

It boots not here to tell all that was said.
The Laureate, sighing, uttered some few words
Of most sublime and solemn tendency.

The Shepherd spoke most incoherent stuff
About the bones of sheep, that on the hills
Perish unseen, holding their stations so.
And he, the tented Angler of the lakes,
Alias the Man of Palms, said nothing meet;
He was o'ercome with feeling,—it is known
To many, and not quite to me unknown,
That the youth's heart is better than his head.

Glad of this opportunity, I said,
Still pointing to the bones, "Access for you
Is yet preserved to principles of truth,
Which the imaginative will upholds
In seats of wisdom, not to be approached
By the inferior faculty that moulds,
With her minute and speculative plans,
Opinions ever changing—I have seen
Regenerative Nature prostrate lie
And drink the soul of things—of living things
And things inanimate, and thus hold up

The beings that we are—that change shall clothe
The naked spirit ceasing to deplore
The burden of existence, her dull eye
To other scenes still changing, still unchanged.
The thinking thoughtless school-boy, the bold youth
Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid,
All cogitative yield obedience up.
And whence this tribute? wherefore these regards?
Not from the naked heart alone of man,
Though framed to high distinction upon earth,
As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,
His own peculiar utterance for distress
Or gladness—it is not the vital part
Of feeling to produce them, without aid
From the pure soul, the soul sublimed and pure
With her two faculties of eye and ear,
Not without such assistance could the eye
Of these benign observances prevail;
Thus are they born, thus fostered, and maintained,
And by the care prospective of our wise

Forefathers, so to guard against the shocks,
The fluctuation, and decay of things.
There lies the channel and original bed,"
Continued I, still pointing to the lake,
" From the beginning hollowed out and scooped
For man's affections, else betrayed and lost,
And swallowed up 'mid desarts infinite.
This is the genuine course, the aim and end
Of prescient reason; all conclusions else
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse."

The men were thunderstruck; the Angler most.
That man of Palms and Plagues, vile copyist!
Seemed compassed in wonder—in my face
Wistful he gazed, and ever and anon
He uttered a short sound at every pause,
But further ventured not—upon the ear
Of the poor Shepherd all these breathings fell
Like sound of distant waters—like the rain,
The treasures of the sky, on the firm flint,

So moveless his impenetrative soul;
He scratched his poll—the Laureate looked to heaven.

More had I said, resuming the discourse,
Of subterraneous magazines of bones,
The faint reflections of infinitude,
The moon and the unvoyageable sky,
And all the high observances of things,
But that, chancing again to turn my eyes
Toward the bosom of that peaceful mere,
I saw a form so ominous approach
My heart was chilled with horror—through the wave
Slowly it came—by Heaven, I saw it move
Toward the grisly skeleton!—Its shape
Was like a coffin, and its colour such,
Black as the death-pall or the cloud of night!
At sight of such a hideous messenger,
Thus journeying through the bowels of the deep,
O'er sluggish leaf and unelaborate stone,
All nature stood in mute astonishment,

As if her pulse lay still—onward it came,
And hovering o'er the bones, it lingered there
In a most holy and impressive guise.
I saw it shake its hideous form, and move
Towards my feet—the elements were hushed,
The birds forsook their singing, for the sight
Was fraught with wonder and astonishment—
It was a tadpole—somewhere by itself
The creature had been left, and there had come
Most timeously, by Providence sent forth,
To close this solemn and momentous tale.

END OF THE STRANGER.

THE FLYING TAILOR.

THE FLYING TAILOR;

BEING

A FURTHER EXTRACT

FROM

The Recluse, a Poem.

If ever chance or choice thy footsteps lead
Into that green and flowery burial-ground
That compasseth with sweet and mournful smiles
The church of Grassmere,—by the eastern gate
Enter—and underneath a stunted yew,
Some three yards distant from the gravel-walk,
On the left-hand side, thou wilt espy a grave,
With unelaborate head-stone beautified,

Conspicuous 'mid the other stoneless heaps
'Neath which the children of the valley lie.
There pause—and with no common feelings read
This short inscription—" Here lies buried
The Flying Tailor, aged twenty-nine!"

Him from his birth unto his death I knew,
And many years before he had attained
The fulness of his fame, I prophesied
The triumphs of that youth's agility,
And crowned him with that name which afterwards
He nobly justified—and dying left
To fame's eternal blazon—read it here—
" The Flying Tailor!"

It is somewhat strange
That his mother was a cripple, and his father
Long way declined into the vale of years,
When their son Hugh was born. At first the babe
Was sickly, and a smile was seen to pass

Across the midwife's cheek, when, holding up
The sickly wretch, she to the father said,
" A fine man-child!" What else could they expect?
The mother being, as I said before,
A cripple, and the father of the child
Long way declined into the vale of years.

But mark the wondrous change—ere he was put
By his mother into breeches, Nature strung
The muscular part of his economy
To an unusual strength, and he could leap,
All unimpeded by his petticoats,
Over the stool on which his mother sat
When carding wool, or cleansing vegetables,
Or meek performing other household tasks.
Cunning he watched his opportunity,
And oft, as house affairs did call her thence,
Overleapt Hugh, a perfect whirligig,
More than six inches o'er the astonished stool!

What boots it to narrate, how at leap-frog
Over the breeched and unbreeched villagers
He shone conspicuous? Leap-frog do I say?
Vainly so named. What though in attitude
The Flying Tailor aped the croaking race
When issuing from the weed-entangled pool,
Tadpoles no more, they seek the new-mown fields,
A jocund people, bouncing to and fro
Amid the odorous clover—while amazed
The grasshopper sits idle on the stalk
With folded pinions and forgets to sing.
Frog-like, no doubt, in attitude he was;
But sure his bounds across the village green
Seemed to my soul—(my soul for ever bright
With purest beams of sacred poesy)—
Like bounds of red-deer on the Highland hill,
When, close environed by the tinchel's chain,
He lifts his branchy forehead to the sky,
Then o'er the many-headed multitude
Springs belling half in terror, half in rage,

And fleeter than the sun-beam or the wind
Speeds to his cloud-lair on the mountain-top.

No more of this—suffice it to narrate,
In his tenth year he was apprenticed
Unto a Master Tailor, by a strong
And regular indenture of seven years,
Commencing from the date the parchment bore,
And ending on a certain day, that made
The term complete of seven solar years.
Oft have I heard him say, that at this time
Of life he was most wretched; for, constrained
To sit all day cross-legged upon a board,
The natural circulation of the blood
Thereby was oft impeded, and he felt
So numbed at times, that when he strove to rise
Up from his work, he could not, but fell back
Among the shreds and patches that bestrewed
With various colours, brightening gorgeously,
The board all round him—patch of warlike red

With which he patched the regimental suits
Of a recruiting military troop,
At that time stationed in a market-town
At no great distance—eke of solemn black
Shreds of no little magnitude, with which
The parson's Sunday-coat was then repairing,
That in the new-roofed church he might appear
With fitting dignity—and gravely fill
The sacred seat of pulpit eloquence,
Cheering with doctrinal point and words of faith
The poor man's heart, and from the shallow wit
Of atheist drying up each argument,
Or sharpening his own weapons, only to turn
Their point against himself, and overthrow
His idols with the very enginery
Reared 'gainst the structure of our English church.

Oft too, when striving all he could to finish
The stated daily task, the needle's point,
Slanting insidious from the eluded stitch,

Hath pinched his finger, by the thimble's mail
In vain defended, and the crimson blood
Distained the lining of some wedding-suit;
A dismal omen! that to mind like his,
Apt to perceive in slightest circumstance
Mysterious meaning, yielded sore distress
And feverish perturbation, so that oft
He scarce could eat his dinner—nay, one night
He swore to run from his apprenticeship,
And go on board a first-rate man-of-war,
From Plymouth lately come to Liverpool,
Where, in the stir and tumult of a crew
Composed of many nations, 'mid the roar
Of wave and tempest, and the deadlier voice
Of battle, he might strive to mitigate
The fever that consumed his mighty heart.

But other doom was his. That very night
A troop of tumblers came into the village,
Tumbler, equestrian, mountebank,—on wire,

On rope, on horse, with cup and balls, intent
To please the gaping multitude, and win
The coin from labour's pocket—small perhaps
Each separate piece of money, but when joined
Making a good round sum, destined ere long
All to be melted, (so these lawless folk
Name spending coin in loose debauchery),
Melted into ale—or haply stouter cheer,
Gin diuretic, or the liquid flame
Of baneful brandy, by the smuggler brought
From the French coast in shallop many-oared,
Skulking by night round headland and through bay,
Afraid of the king's cutter, or the barge
Of cruising frigate, armed with chosen men,
And with her sweeps across the foamy waves
Moving most beautiful with measured strokes.

It chanced that as he threw a somerset
Over three horses, (each of larger size
Than our small mountain-breed), one of the troop

Put out his shoulder, and was otherwise
Considerably bruised, especially
About the loins and back. So he became
Useless unto that wandering company,
And likely to be felt a sore expense
To men just on the eve of bankruptcy;
So the master of the troop determined
To leave him in the work-house, and proclaimed
That if there was a man among the crowd
Willing to fill his place and able too,
Now was the time to shew himself. Hugh Thwaites
Heard the proposal, as he stood apart
Striving with his own soul—and with a bound
He leapt into the circle, and agreed
To supply the place of him who had been hurt.
A shout of admiration and surprise
Then tore heaven's concave, and completely filled
The little field, where near a hundred people
Were standing in a circle round and fair.
Oft have I striven by meditative power,

And reason working 'mid the various forms
Of various occupations and professions,
To explain the cause of one phenomenon,
That, since the birth of science, hath remained
A bare enunciation, unexplained
By any theory, or mental light
Streamed on it by the imaginative will,
Or spirit musing in the cloudy shrine,
The penetralia of the immortal soul.
I now allude to that most curious fact,
That 'mid a given number, say threescore,
Of tailors, more men of agility
Will issue out, than from an equal shew
From any other occupation—say
Smiths, barbers, bakers, butchers, or the like.
Let me not seem presumptuous, if I strive
This subject to illustrate; nor, while I give
My meditations to the world, will I
Conceal from it, that much I have to say
I learnt from one who knows the subject well

In theory and practice—need I name him?
The light-heeled author of the Isle of Palms,
Illustrious more for leaping than for song.

First, then, I would lay down this principle,
That all excessive action by the law
Of nature tends unto repose. This granted,
All action not excessive must partake
The nature of excessive action—so
That in all human beings who keep moving,
Unconscious cultivation of repose
Is going on in silence. Be it so.
Apply to men of sedentary lives
This leading principle, and we behold
That, active in their inactivity,
And unreposing in their long repose,
They are, in fact, the sole depositaries
Of all the energies by others wasted,
And come at last to teem with impulses
Of muscular motion, not to be withstood,
And either giving vent unto themselves

In numerous feats of wild agility,
Or terminating in despair and death.

Now, of all sedentary lives, none seems
So much so as the tailor's.—Weavers use
Both arms and legs, and, we may safely add,
Their bodies too, for arms and legs can't move
Without the body—as the waving branch
Of the green oak disturbs his glossy trunk.
Not so the tailor—for he sits cross-legged,
Cross-legged for ever! save at time of meals,
In bed, or when he takes his little walk
From shop to alehouse, picking, as he goes,
Stray patch of fustian, cloth, or cassimere,
Which, as by natural instinct, he discerns,
Though soiled with mud, and by the passing wheel
Bruised to attenuation 'gainst the stones.

Here then we pause—and need no farther go;
We have reached the sea-mark of our utmost sail.

Now let me trace the effect upon his mind
Of this despised profession. Deem not thou,
O rashly deem not, that his boyish days
Past at the shop-board, when the stripling bore
With bashful feeling of apprenticeship
The name of Tailor; deem not that his soul
Derived no genial influence from a life,
Which, although haply adverse in the main
To the growth of intellect, and the excursive power,
Yet in its ordinary forms possessed
A constant influence o'er his passing thoughts,
Moulded his appetences and his will,
And wrought out, by the work of sympathy
Between his bodily and mental form,
Rare correspondence, wondrous unity!
Perfect—complete—and fading not away.
While on his board cross-legged he used to sit,
Shaping of various garments, to his mind
An image rose of every character
For whom each special article was framed,

Coat, waistcoat, breeches. So at last his soul
Was like a storehouse, filled with images,
By musing hours of solitude supplied.
Nor did his ready fingers shape the cut
Of villager's uncouth habiliments
With greater readiness, than did his mind
Frame corresponding images of those
Whose corporal measurement the neat-marked pa
In many a mystic notch for aye retained.
Hence, more than any man I ever knew,
Did he possess the power intuitive
Of diving into character. A pair
Of breeches, to his philosophic eye,
Were not what unto other folks they seem,
Mere simple breeches, but in them he saw
The symbol of the soul—mysterious, high
Hieroglyphics! such as Egypt's Priest
Adored upon the holy Pyramid,
Vainly imagined tomb of monarchs old,
But raised by wise philosophy, that sought

By darkness to illumine, and to spread
Knowledge by dim concealment—process high
Of man's imaginative, deathless soul.
Nor, haply, in the abasement of the life
Which stern necessity had made his own,
Did he not recognize a genial power
Of soul-ennobling fortitude. He heard
Unmoved the witling's shallow contumely,
And thus, in spite of nature, by degrees
He saw a beauty and a majesty
In this despised trade, which warrior's brow
Hath rarely circled—so that when he sat
Beneath his sky-light window, he hath cast
A gaze of triumph on the godlike sun,
And felt that orb, in all his annual round,
Beheld no happier, nobler character
Than him, Hugh Thwaites, a little tailor boy.

Thus I, with no unprofitable song,
Have, in the silence of the umbrageous wood,

Chaunted the heroic youthful attributes
Of him the Flying Tailor. Much remains
Of highest argument, to lute or lyre
Fit to be murmured with impassioned voice;
And when, by timely supper and by sleep
Refreshed, I turn me to the welcome task,
With lofty hopes,—Reader, do thou expect
The final termination of my lay.
For, mark my words,—eternally my name
Shall last on earth, conspicuous like a star
'Mid that bright galaxy of favoured spirits,
Who, laughed at constantly whene'er they published,
Survived the impotent scorn of base Reviews,
Monthly or Quarterly, or that accursed
Journal, the Edinburgh Review, that lives
On tears, and sighs, and groans, and brains, and blood.

END OF THE FLYING TAILOR.

JAMES RIGG.

STILL FURTHER EXTRACT

FROM

The Recluse, a Poem.

JAMES RIGG.

On Tuesday morn, at half past six o'clock,
I rose and dressed myself, and having shut
The door o' the bed-room still and leisurely,
I walked down stairs. When at the outer-door,
I firmly grasped the key that ere night-fall
Had turned the lock into its wonted niche
Within the brazen implement, that shone
With no unseemly splendour,—mellowed light,

Elicited by touch of careful hand
On the brown lintel; and the obedient door,
As at a potent necromancer's touch,
Into the air receded suddenly,
And gave wide prospect of the sparkling lake,
Just then emerging from the snow-white mist
Like angel's veil slow-folded up to heaven.
And lo! a vision bright and beautiful
Sheds a refulgent glory o'er the sand,
The sand and gravel of my avenue!
For, standing silent by the kitchen-door,
Tinged by the morning sun, and in its own
Brown natural hide most lovely, two long ears
Upstretching perpendicularly, then
With the horizon levelled—to my gaze
Superb as horn of fabled Unicorn,
Each in its own proportions grander far
Than the frontal glory of that wandering beast,
Child of the desart! lo! a beauteous Ass,
With panniers hanging silent at each side;

Silent as cage of bird whose song is mute,
Though silent yet not empty, filled with bread,
The staff of life, the means by which the soul,
By fate obedient to the powers of sense,
Renews its faded vigour, and keeps up
A proud communion with the eternal heavens.
Fastened to a ring it stood, while at its head
A boy of six years old, as angel bright,
Patted its neck, and to its mouth applied
The harmless thistle that his hand had plucked
From the wild common, melancholy crop.

Not undelightful was that simple sight,
For I at once did recognize that ass
To be the property of one James Rigg,
Who for the last seven years had managed,
By a firm course of daily industry,
A numerous family to support, and clothe
In plain apparel of our shepherd's grey.
On him a heavy and calamitous lot

Had fallen. For working up among the hills
In a slate-quarry, while he filled the stone,
Bored by his cunning, with the nitrous grain,
It suddenly exploded, and the flash
Quenched the bright lustre of his cheerful eyes
For ever, so that now they roll in vain
To find the searching light that idly plays
O'er the white orbs, and on the silent cheeks
By those orbs unillumined, calm and still.

Quoth I, I never see thee and thy ass,
My worthy friend, but I, methinks, behold
The might of that unconquerable spirit,
Which, operating in the ancient world
Before the Flood, when fallen man was driven
From paradise, accompanied him to fields
Bare and unlovely, when the sterile earth
Oft mocked the kindly culture of the hand
Of scientific agriculture—mocked
The shepherd's sacrifice, and even denied

A scanty pittance to the fisherman,
Who by the rod or net sought to supply
His natural wants from river or from mere.
Blind were these people to the cunning arts
Of smooth civility—men before the Flood,
And therefore in the scriptures rightly called
Antediluvians!

While thus I spake
With wisdom, that industrious blind old man,
Seemingly flattered by those words of mine,
Which, judging by myself, I scarcely think
He altogether understood, replied,
While the last thistle slowly disappeared
Within the jaws of that most patient beast:
"Master!" quoth he,—and while he spake his hat
With something of a natural dignity
Was holden in his hand—"Master," quoth he,
"I hear that you and Mrs Wordsworth think
Of going into Scotland; and I wish

To know if, while the family are from home,
I shall supply the servants with their bread,
For I suppose they will not all be put
Upon board-wages."

Something in his voice,
While thus he spake of simplest articles
Of household use, yet sunk upon my soul,
Like distant thunder from the mountain-gloom
Wakening the sleeping echoes; so sublime
Was that old man, so plainly eloquent
His untaught tongue! though something of a lisp,
(Natural defect), and a slight stutter too,
(Haply occasioned by some faint attack,
Harmless, if not renewed, of apoplex),
Rendered his utterance most peculiar,
So that a stranger, had he heard that voice
Once only, and then travelled into lands
Beyond the ocean, had on his return,
Met where they might, have known that curious voice

Of lisp and stutter, yet I ween withal
Graceful, and breathed from an original mind.

Here let me be permitted to relate,
For sake of those few readers who prefer
A simple picture of the heart to all
Poetic imagery from earth or heaven
Drawn by the skill of bard;—let me, I say,
For sake of such few readers, be permitted
To tell, in plain and ordinary verse,
What James Rigg first experienced in his soul,
Standing amid the silence of the hills,
With both the pupils of his eyes destroyed.

When first the loud explosion through the sky
Sent its far voice, and from the trembling rocks
That with an everlasting canopy
O'ershadow Stickle-Tarn the echoes woke,
So that the mountain-solitude was filled
With sound, as with the air! He stood awhile,

Wondering from whence that tumult might proceed,
And all unconscious that the blast had dimmed
His eyes for ever, and their smiling blue
Converted to a pale and mournful grey.
Was it, he thought, some blast the quarrymen
Blasted at Conniston, or in that vale,
Called from its huge and venerable yew,
Yewdale? (though other etymologists
Derive that appellation from the sheep,
Of which the female in our English tongue
Still bears the name of ewe.) Or did the gun
Of fowler, wandering o'er the heathery wilds
In search of the shy gor-cock, yield that voice
Close to his ear, so close that through his soul
It rolled like thunder? Or had news arrived
Of Buonaparte's last discomfiture
By the bold Russ, and that great heir of fame
Blucher, restorer of the thrones of kings?
And upon Lowood bowling-green did Laker,
Glad of expedient to beguile the hours,

Slow moving before dinner, did he fire,
In honour of that glorious victory,
The old two-pounder by the wind and rain
Rusted, and seemingly to him more old
Than in reality it was, though old,
And on that same green lying since the days
Of the last landlord, Gilbert Ormathwaite,
Name well-remembered all the country round,
Though twenty summer suns have shed their flowers
On the green turf that hides his mortal dust?
Or was it, thought he, the loud signal-gun
Of pleasure-boat, on bright Winander's wave,
Preparing 'gainst some new antagonist
To spread her snowy wings before the wind,
Emulous of glory and the palmy wreath
Of inland navigation? Graceful sport!
It next perhaps occurred to him to ask
Himself, or some one near him, if the sound
Was not much louder than those other sounds,
Fondly imagined by him,—and both he,

And that one near him, instantly replied
Unto himself, that most assuredly
The noise proceeded from the very stone
Which they two had so long been occupied
In boring, and that probably some spark,
Struck from the gavelock 'gainst the treacherous
flint,
Had fallen amid the powder, and so caused
The stone t' explode, as gunpowder will do,
With most miraculous force, especially
When close rammed down into a narrow bore,
And covered o'er with a thin layer of sand
To exclude the air; else otherwise the grain,
Escaping from the bore, would waste itself
In the clear sky, and leave the bored stone
Lying unmoved upon the verdant earth,
Like some huge creature stretched in lazy sleep
Amid the wilderness, or lying dead
Beneath the silence of the summer sun.

This point established, he was gently led
By the natural progress of the human soul,
Aspiring after truth, nor satisfied
Till she hath found it, wheresoever hid,
(Yea even though at the bottom of a well),
To inquire if any mischief had been done
By that explosion; and while thus he stood
Inquiring anxiously of all around,
A small sharp boy, whose task it was to bring
His father's breakfast to him 'mid the hills,
Somewhat about eleven years of age,
Though less than some lads at the age of eight,
Exclaimed—"Why, father, do you turn the white
Of your eyes up so?" At these simple words
Astonishment and horror struck the souls
Of all the quarrymen, for they descried,
Clear as the noon-day, that James Rigg had lost
His eyesight, yea his very eyes were lost,
Quenched in their sockets, melted into air,
A moisture mournful as the cold dim gleam

Of water sleeping in some shady wood,
Screened from the sunbeams and the breath of hea

On that he lifted up his hardened hands,
Hardened by sun, and rain, and storm, and toil,
Unto the blasted eye-balls, and awhile
Stood motionless as fragment of that rock
That wrought him all his woe, and seemed to lie,
Unwitting of the evil it had done,
Calm and serene, even like a flock of sheep
Scattered in sunshine o'er the Cheviot hills.
I ween that, as he stood in solemn trance,
Tears flowed for him who wept not for himself,
And that his fellow-quarrymen, though rude
Of soul and manner, not untouchingly
Deplored his cruel doom, and gently led
His footsteps to a green and mossy rock,
By sportive nature fashioned like a chair,
With seat, back, elbows,—a most perfect chair
Of unhewn living rock! There, hapless man,

He moved his lips, as if he inly prayed,
And clasped his hands, and raised his sightless face
Unto the smiling sun, who walked through heaven
Regardless of that fatal accident,
By which a man was suddenly reduced
From an unusual clear long-sightedness
To utter blindness—blindness without hope,
So wholly were the visual nerves destroyed.
" I wish I were at home!" he slowly said,
" For though I ne'er must see that home again,
I yet may hear it, and a thousand sounds
Are there to gladden a poor blind man's heart."

He uttered truth,—lofty, consoling truth!
Thanks unto gracious Nature, who had framed
So wondrously the structure of the soul,
That though it live on outward ministry
Of gross material objects, by them fed
And nourished, even as if the external world

Were the great wet-nurse of the human race,
Yet of such food deprived, she doth not pine
And fret away her mystic energies
In fainting inanition; but, superior
To the food she fed on, in her charge retains
Each power, and sense, and faculty; and lives,
Cameleon-like, upon the air serene
Of her own bright imaginative will,
Desiderating nothing that upholds,
Upholds and magnifies, but without eyes
Sees—and without the vestige of an ear
Listens, and listening, hears—and without sense
Of touch (if haply from the body's surface
Have gone the sense of feeling) keenly feels,
And in despite of nose abbreviate
Smells like a wolf,—wolf, who for leagues can snuff
The scent of carrion, bird by fowler killed,
Killed but not found, or little vernal kid
Yeaned in the frost, and soon outstretched in death,
White as the snow that serves it for a shroud.

Therefore James Rigg was happy, and his face
Soon brightened up with smiles, and in his voice
Contentment spoke most musical; so when
The doctor ordered his most worthy wife
To loose the bandage from her husband's eyes,
He was so reconciled unto his lot,
That there almost appeared to him a charm
In blindness—so that, had his sight returned,
I have good reason to believe his happiness
Had been thereby scarcely at all increased.

While thus confabulating with James Rigg,
Even at that moment when such silence lay
O'er all my cottage, as, by mystic power
Belonging to the kingdom of the ear,
O'erthrew at once all old remembrances—
Even at that moment, over earth, and air,
The waving forest, and the sleeping lake,
And the far sea of mountains that uplifted

Its stately billows through the clear blue sky,
Came such a sound, as if from her dumb trance
Awakened Nature, starting suddenly,
Were jealous of insulted majesty,
And sent through continent and trembling isle
Her everlasting thunders. Such a crash
Tore the foundations of the earth, and shook
The clouds that slumbered on the breast of heaven!
It was the parlour-bell that suddenly
An unknown hand had rung. I cast my eyes
Up the long length of bell-rope, and I saw
The visible motion of its iron tongue;
By Heaven I *saw* it tingling! Fast at first,
O most unearthly fast, then somewhat slower,
Next very slow indeed, until some four
Or half-a-dozen minutes at the most,
By Time's hand cut from off the shortened hour,
It stopped quite of itself—and idly down,

Like the sear leaf upon the autumnal bough
Dangled! * * * *

* * * * *

END OF JAMES RIGG.

THE GUDE GREYE KATT.

THE GUDE GREYE KATT.

THERE wase ane katt, and ane gude greye katt,
That duallit in the touir of Blain,
And mony haif hearit of that gude katt,
That neuir shall heare agayn.

Scho had ane brynd upon hir backe,
And ane brent abone hir bree;
Hir culoris war the merilit heuis
That dappil the krene-berrye.

But scho had that withyn hir ee
That man may neuir declaire,
For scho had that withyn hir ee
Quhich mortyl dochtna beare.

Sumtymis ane ladye sochte the touir,
Of rych and fayre beautye;
Sumtymis ane maukyn cam therin,
Hytchyng rycht wistfullye.

But quhan they serchit the touir of Blain,
And socht it sayre and lang,
They fande nocht but the gude greye katt
Sittyng thrummyng at hir sang;

And up scho rase and pacit hir wayis
Full stetlye owre the stene,
And streikit out hir braw hint-leg,
As nocht at all had bene.

Weil mocht the wyfis in that kintrye
Rayse up ane grefous stir,
For neuir ane katt in all the lande
Durst moop or melle wyth hir.

Quhaneuir theye lukit in hir fece
Their fearis greue se ryfe,
Theye snirtit and theye yollit throu frychte,
And rann for dethe and lyfe.

The Lairde of Blain he had ane spouis,
Beth cumlye, gude, and kynde;
But scho had gane to the landis of pece,
And left him sad behynde;

He had seuin dochteris all se fayre,
Of mayre than yerdlye grece,
Seuin bonnyer babis neuir braithit ayre,
Or smylit in parentis fece.

Ane daye quhan theye war all alane,
He sayde with hevye mene;
" Quhat will cum of ye, my deire babyis,
Now quhan your moderis gene?

" O quha will leide your tendyr myndis,
The pethe of ladyhoode,
To thynke as ladye ocht to thynke,
And feele as mayden sholde?

" Weil mot it kythe in maydenis mynde,
And maydenis modestye,
The want of hir that weil wase fit
For taske unmèite for me!"

But up then spak the gude greye katt
That satt on the herthe stene,
" O hald yer tung, my deire maister,
Nor mak se sayre ane mene;

" For I will breide your seuin dochteris,
To winsum ladyhoode,
To thynke as ladyis ocht to thynke,
And feile as maydenis sholde.

" I'll breide them fayre, I'll breide them free
From every seye of syn,
Fayre as the blumyng roz withoute,
And pure in herte withyn."

Rychte sayre astoundit wase the Lairde,
Ane frychtenit man wase he;
But the sueite babyis war full faine,
And chicklit joyfullye.

May Ella tooke the gude greye katt
Rychte fondlye on hir knee,
" And hethe my pussye lernit to speike?
I troue scho lernit of me."

The katt, scho thrummyt at hir sang,
And turnit hir haffet sleike,
And drewe hir bonnye bawsenyt side,
Againste the babyis cheike.

But the Lairde he was ane cunnyng Lairde,
And he saide with spechis fayre,
" I haif a feste in hall to nychte,
Sweite pussye, be you there."

The katt scho set ane luke on him,
That turnit his herte til stene;
" If you haif feste in hall to nychte,
I shall be there for ane."

The feste wase laide, the tabil spread
With rych and nobil store,
And there wase set the Byschope of Blain,
With all his holy kore;

He wase ane wyce and wylie wychte
Of wytch and warlockrye,
And mony ane wyfe had byrnit to coome,
Or hangit on ane tre.

He kenit their merkis and molis of hell,
And made them joifully
Ryde on the reid-het gad of ern,
Ane plesaunt sycht to se.

The Byschope said ane holye grace,
Unpatiente to begyn,
But nathyng of the gude greye katt
Was funde the touir withyn;

But in there cam ane fayre ladye,
Cledd in the sylken sheene,
Ane winsumer and bonnyer may
On yerde was neuir seene;

Scho tuke her sete at tabil heide,
With courtlye modestye,
Quhill ilken bosome bymit with lufe,
And waulit ilken ee.

Sueite was hir voyce to all the ryng,
Unlesse the Lairde of Blain,
For he had hearit that very voyce
From off his own herthe stene.

He barrit the doris and windois fast,
He barrit them to the jynne;
" Now in the grece of Heuin," said he,
" Your excercyse begyn;

" There is ne grece nor happynesse
For my poor babyis soulis,
Until you trye that weirdlye wytch,
And rost hir on the colis.

" If this be scho," the Byschope saide,
" This beauteous cumlye may,
It is meite I try hir all alone
To heire quhat scho will saye."

" No," quod the Lairde, " I suthelye sweire
None shall from this proceide,
Until I see that wycked wytch
Byrnt til ane izel reide.

The Byschope knelit doune and prayit,
Quhill all their hayris did creipe;
And aye he hoonit and he prayit,
Quhill all war faste asleipe;

He prayit gain syn and Sauten bothe,
And deidis of shyft and schame;
But all the tyme his faithful handis
Pressit the cumlye dame.

Weil saw the Lairde, but nething saide,
He kenit, in holye zele,
He grepit for the merkis of hell,
Whilk he did ken ful weil.

And aye he pressit hir lillye hande,
And kyssit it ferventlye,
And prayit betweine, for och ane kynde
And lufyng preste was he!

The Byschope stappit and sterted sore,
Wide gaipen with affrychte,
For och that fayre and lillye hande
Had turned ane paw outrychte!

Ane paw with long and crukit clawis!
That breste of heuinlye charme
Had turnit till brusket of ane katt,
Ful hayrie and ful warme!

And there scho satt on lang-settil,
With een of glentyng flame,
And theye war on the Byschope sett
Lyke poynter on his game.

The Byschope turnit him runde aboute
To se quhat he mocht se,
Scho strak ane clawe in ilken lug,
And throu the rofe did flee.

The katt went throu withouten stop
Lyke schado throu the daye,
But the great Byschopis fleschlye forme
Made all the rofe gif waye;

The silyng faldit lyke ane buke,
The serker crashit amayne,
And shredis and flenis of brokyn stenis
Fell to the grunde lyke rayne.

The braide ful mone wase up the lyft,
The nychte wase lyke ane daye,
As the greate Byschope tuke his jante
Up throu the milkye-waye;

He cryit se loude and lustilye
The hillis and skyis war riuen;
Och sicken cryis war neuir heurit
Atweine the yerde and heuin!

They sawe him spurryng in the ayre,
And flynging horredlye,
And than he prayit and sang ane saum,
For ane fearit wychte was he;

But aye his waylingis fainter greue
As the braide lyft he crossit,
Quhill sum saide that theye hearit them still,
And sum saide all wase loste.

There was ane herd on Dollar-Lawe,
Turnyng his flockis by nychte,
Or stealyng in ane gude haggyse
Before the mornyng lychte.

He hearit the cryis cum yont the heuin,
And sawe them bethe passe bye;
The katt scho skreuit up hir taile
As sayrlye pinchit to flye.

But aye scho thrummyt at hir sang,
Though he wase sore in thrall,
Like katt that hethe ane jollye mouse
Gaun murryng throu the hall.

That greye kattis sang it wase se sweete,
As on the nychte it fell,
The Murecokis dancit ane seuinsum ryng
Arunde the hether bell;

The Foumartis jyggit by the brukis,
The Maukinis by the kaile,
And the Otar dancit ane minowaye
As he gaed ouir the daile;

The Hurchanis helde ane kintrye dance
Alang the brumye knowe,
And the gude Toop-hogg rase fra his layre
And ualtzit with the Youe.

The Greye Kattis Sang.

Murr, my Lorde Byschope,
I syng to you;
Murr, my Lord Byschope,
Bawlillilu!
Murr, my Lord Byschope, &c.

That nychte ane hynde on Border syde
Chancit at his dore to be;

He spyit ane greate clypse of the mone,
And ben the house ran he;

He laide ane wisp upon the colis,
And bleue full lang and sayre,
And rede the Belfaste Almanake,
But the clypse it wase not there.

Och but that hynde wase sor aghaste,
And haf to madnesse driuen,
For he thochte he hearit ane drounyng man
Syching alangis the heuin.

That nychte ane greate Filossifere
Had watchit on Etnyis height,
To merk the rysing of the sonne,
And the blythsum mornyng lychte;

And all the lychtlye lynis of goude,
As on the se they fell;

And watch the fyir and the smoke,
Cum rummilyng up fra hell.

He lukit este, the daye cam on,
Upon his gladsum pethe,
And the braid mone hang in the west,
Her palenesse wase lyke dethe;

And by her sat ane littil stern,
Quhan all the laife war gane,
It was lyke ane wee fadyng geme
In the wyde worild its lane.

Then the Filossifere was sadde,
And he turnit his ee awaye,
For they mindit him of the yerdlye greate,
In dethe or in decaye:

He turnit his face unto the north,
The fallyng teare to drie,

And he spyit ane thyng of wonderous maike,
Atweine the yerde and skie;

It wase lyke ane burd withoutten wyng,
Rychte wonderous to beholde,
And it bure ane forked thyng alang,
With swiftnesse manyfolde:

But aye it greue as neare it dreue—
His herte bete wondir sayre!
The sonne, the mone, and sternis war gaine,
He thochte of them ne mayre,
Quhan he behelde ane jollye preste
Cumyng swyggyng throu the ayre.

The katt scho helde him by the luggis
Atour the ausum hole,
And och the drede that he wase in
Wase mayre than man colde thole;

He cryit, " O Pussye, hald your gryp,
O hald and dinna spaire;
O drap me in the yerde or se,
But dinna drap me there."

But scho wase ane doure and deidlye katt,
And scho saide with lychtsum ayre,
" You kno heuin is ane blissit plece,
And all the prestis gang there."

" Och sweete, sweete Pussye, hald your gryp,
Spaire nouther cleke nor clawe;
Is euir that lyke heuin abone,
In quhich am lyke to fa'?"

And aye scho hang him by the luggis
Abone the ausum den,
Till he fande the gryp rive slowlye out,
Sore was he quakyng then!

Doune went the Byschope, doune lyke leide,
Into the hollowe nychte,
His goune was flappyng in the ayre,
Quhan he was out of sychte.

They hearit him honyng down the deep,
Till the croone it dyit awaye,
It wase lyke the stoune of ane great bom-be
Gaun soundying throu the daye.

All wase in sloomeryng quietnesse,
Quhan he went doune to hell,
But seckn an houre wase neuir seine,
Quhan the gude lorde Byschope fell.

Then cam the smouder and the smoke
Up raschyng vilentlye,
And it tourackit awaye til heuin
Ane gloryous sychte to se;

For aye it rowed its fleecye curlis
Out to the rysing sonne,
And the estern syde was gildit goude,
And all the westlin dunne.

Then the Filossifere wase muvit,
And he wist not quhat til say,
For he saw nochte of the gude greye katt;
But he saw ane ladye gay.

Hir goune wase of the gress-grene sylk,
And hir ee wase lyke the deue,
And hir hayre wase lyke the threidis of goude
That runde her shoulderis fleue.

Hir gairtenis war the raynbowis heme,
That scho tyit anethe hir knee,
And aye scho kemit hir yellow hayre,
And sang full plesauntlye.

" I am the Queene of the Fairy Land,
I'll do ne harme to thee,
For I am the gardian of the gude,
Let the wycked be ware of me.

" There ar seuin pearlis in yonder touir,
Their number sune shall wane ;
There are seuin flouris in fayre Scotland,
I'll pu them ane by ane ;

" And the weeist burd in all the bouir
Shall be the last thatis taene :
The Lairde of Blain hethe seuin dochteris,
But sune he shall haif nane.

" I'll bathe them all in the krystal streime
Throu the Fairy Land that flouis,
I'll seike the bouris of paradyce
For the bonnyest flouir that blouis,

" And I'll distil it in the dene
That fallis on the hillis of hevin,
And the hues that luvelye angelis weire
Shall to these maidis be given.

" And I'll trie how luvelye and how fayre
Their formis may be to see,
And I'll trie how pure the maydenis mynde
In this ill worild may be."

The Lairde of Blain he walkis the wode,
But he walkis it all alane;
The Lairde of Blain had seuin dochteris,
But now he hethe not ane.

They neuir war on dethbed layde,
But they elyit all awaye;
He lost his babyis ane by ane
Atween the nychte and day.

He kend not quhat to thynk or saye,
Or quhat did him beseime,
But he walkit throu this weirye worild
Like ane thatis in a dreime.

Quhan seuin lang yearis, and seuin lang daies,
Had slowlye cumit and gane,
He walkit throu the gude grene wode,
And he walkit all alane;

He turnit his fece unto the skie,
And the teire stude in his ee,
For he thocht of the ladye of his lufe,
And his lost familye:

But aye his fayth was firm and sure,
And his trust in Heuin still,
For he hopit to meite them all agayne
Beyond the reiche of ill:

And aye the teiris fell on the grene,
As he knelit downe to praye,
But he wase se muvit with tendirnesse
That ane worde he colde not say.

He lukit oure his left shouldir
To se quhat he mocht se;
There he behelde seuin bonnye maydis
Cumyng tryppyng owre the le!

Sic beautye ee had neuir seine,
Nor euir agayne shall se,
Sic luvelye formis of flesche and blude,
On yerde can neuir be;

The joie that bemit in ilken ee
Wase lyke the risyng sonne,
The fayriste blumis in all the wode
Besyde their formis war dunne;

There wase ane wrethe on ilken heide,
On ilken bosom thre,
And the brychtest flouris the worild e'er saw
War noddyng owre the bre.

But cese yer strayne, my gude auld herpe,
O cese and syng ne mayre!
Gin ye wolde of that meityng tell,
O I mocht reue it sayre!

There wolde ne ee in faire Scotland,
Nor luvelye cheike be drie;
The laveroke wolde forget hir sang,
And drap deide fra the skie;

And the desye wolde ne mayre be quhyte,
And the lillye wolde chainge hir heue,
For the blude-drapis wolde fal fra the mone,
And reiden the mornyng deue.

But quhan I tell ye oute my tale,
Ful playnle ye will se,
That quhare there is ne syn nor schame
No sorroue there can be.

END OF THE GUDE GREYE KATT.

ISABELLE.

ISABELLE.

CAN there be a moon in heaven to-night,
That the hill and the grey cloud seem so light?
The air is whitened by some spell,
For there is no moon, I know it well:
On this third day, the sages say,
('Tis wonderful how well they know,)
The moon is journeying far away,
Bright somewhere in a heaven below.

It is a strange and lovely night,
A greyish pale, but not white!

Is it rain, or is it dew,
That falls so thick I see its hue?
In rays it follows, one, two, three,
Down the air so merrily,
Said Isabelle, so let it be!

Why does the Lady Isabelle
Sit in the damp and dewy dell
Counting the racks of drizzly rain,
And how often the Rail cries over again?
For she's harping, harping in the brake,
Craik, craik——Craik, craik.—
Ten times nine, and thrice eleven;—
That last call was an hundred and seven.
Craik, craik—the hour is near—
Let it come, I have no fear!
Yet it is a dreadful work, I wis,
Such doings in a night like this!

Sounds the river harsh and loud?
The stream sounds harsh, but not loud.

There is a cloud that seems to hover,
By western hill the church-yard over,
What is it like?—'Tis like a whale;
'Tis like a shark with half the tail,
Not half, but third and more;
Now 'tis a wolf, and now a boar;
Its face is raised—it cometh here;
Let it come—there is no fear.
There's two for heaven, and ten for hell,
Let it come—'tis well—'tis well!
Said the Lady Isabelle.

What ails that little cut-tailed whelp,
That it continues to yelp, yelp?
Yelp, yelp, and it turns its eye
Up to the tree and half to the sky,
Half to the sky and full to the cloud,
And still it whines and barks aloud.
Why I should dread I cannot tell;
There is a spirit; I know it well!

I see it in yon falling beam—
Is it a vision or a dream?
It is no dream, full well I know,
I have a woful deed to do!
Hush, hush, thou little murmurer;
I tell thee hush—the dead are near!

If thou knewest all, poor tail-less whelp,
Well mightest thou tremble, growl, and yelp;
But thou knowest nothing, hast no part,
(Simple and stupid as thou art)
Save gratitude and truth of heart.
But they are coming by this way
That have been dead for a year and a day;
Without challenge, without change,
They shall have their full revenge!
They have been sent to wander in woe
In the lands of flame, and the lands of snow;
But those that are dead
Shall the greensward tread,

And those that are living
Shall soon be dead!
None to pity them, none to help!
Thou mayest quake, my cut-tailed whelp!

There are two from the grave
That I fain would save;
Full hard is the weird
For the young and the brave!
Perchance they are rapt in vision sweet,
While the passing breezes kiss their feet;
And they are dreaming of joy and love!—
Well, let them go—there's room above.

There are three times three, and three to these,
Count as you will, by twos or threes!
Three for the gallows, and three for the wave,
Three to roast behind the stone,
And three that shall never see the grave

Until the day and the hour are gone!
For retribution is mine alone!
The cloud is redder in its hue,
The hour is near, and vengeance due;
It cannot, and it will not fail,—
'Tis but a step to Borrowdale!
Why shouldest thou love and follow me?
Poor faithful thing! I pity thee!

Up rose the Lady Isabelle,
I may not of her motion tell,
Yet thou mayest look upon her frame;
Look on it with a passing eye,
But think not thou upon the same,
Turn away and ask not why;
For if thou darest look again,
Mad of heart and seared of brain,
Thou shalt never look again!

What can ail that short-tailed whelp?
'Tis either behind or far before,
And it hath changed its whining yelp
To a shortened yuff—its little core
Seems bursting with terror and dismay,
Yuff, yuff—hear how it speeds away.
Hold thy peace, thou yemering thing,
The very night-wind's slumbering,
And thou wilt wake to woe and pain
Those that must never wake again.

Meet is its terror and its flight,
There's one on the left and two on the right!
But save the paleness of the face,
All is beauty and all is grace!
The earth and air are tinged with blue;
There are no footsteps in the dew;
Is this to wandering spirits given,
Such stillness on the face of heaven?

The fleecy clouds that sleep above
Are like the wing of beauteous dove,
And the leaf of the elm-tree does not move!
Yet they are coming! and they are three!
Jesu! Maria! can it be!

THE CONCLUSION.

SLEEP on, fair Maiden of Borrowdale!
Sleep! O sleep! and do not wake!
Dream of the dance, till the foot so pale,
And the beauteous ancle shiver and shake;
Till thou shalt press, with feeling bland,
Thine own fair breast for lover's hand.
Thy heart is light as summer breeze,
Thy heart is joyous as the day;
Man never form of angel sees,
But thou art fair as they!
So lovers ween, and so they say,
So thine shall ween for many a day!
The hour's at hand, O woe is me!
For they are coming, and they are three!

THE CHERUB.

THE CHERUB.

WAS it not lovely to behold
A Cherub come down from the sky,
A beauteous thing of heavenly mould,
With ringlets of the wavy gold,
Dancing and floating curiously?
To see it come down to the earth
This beauteous thing of heavenly birth!
Leaving the fields of balm and bliss,
To dwell in such a world as this!

I heard a maiden sing the while
A strain so holy, it might beguile
An angel from the radiant spheres,
That have swum in light ten thousand years;
Ten times ten thousand is tôo few—
Child of heaven, can this be true?
And then I saw that beauteous thing
Slowly from the clouds descending,
Brightness, glory, beauty blending,
In the mid air hovering.
It had also a halo round its head,
It was not of the rainbow's hue,
For in it was no shade of blue,
But a beam of amber mixed with red,
Like that which mingles in the ray
A little after the break of day.
Its raiment was the thousand dyes
Of flowers in the heavenly paradise;
Its track a beam of the sun refined,
And its chariot was the southern wind:

My heart danced in me with delight,
And my spirits mounted at the sight,
And I said within me it is well;
But where the bower, or peaceful dell,
Where this pure heavenly thing may dwell?
Then I bethought me of the place
To lodge the messenger of grace;
And I chose the ancient sycamore,
And the little green by Greta's shore;
It is a spot so passing fair,
That sainted thing might sojourn there.

Go tell yon stranger artizan,
Build as quickly as he can.
Heaven shield us from annoy!
What shall form this dome of joy?
The leaf of the rose would be too rude
For a thing that is not flesh and blood;
The walls must be of the sunny air,
And the roof the silvery gossamer,

And all the ceiling, round and round,
Wove half of light, and half of sound;
The sounds must be the tones that fly
From distant harp, just ere they die;
And the light the moon's soft midnight ray,
When the cloud is downy, and thin, and grey.
And such a bower of light and love,
Of beauty, and of harmony,
In earth below, or heaven above,
No mortal thing shall ever see.

The dream is past, it is gone away!
The rose is blighted on the spray:
I look behind, I look before,
The happy vision is no more!
But in its room a darker shade
Than eye hath pierced, or darkness made.
I cannot turn, yet do not know
What I would, or whither go;

But I have heard, to heart of sin,
A small voice whispering within,
'Tis all I know, and all I trust,—
" That man is weak, but God is just."

END OF THE CHERUB.

PETER OF BARNET.

PETER OF BARNET.

PETER of Barnet—knowest thou such a man?
'Tis meet thou shouldest, for he's a manual
Which one may ever read,—I love old Peter
Not for his genius or stupendous science,
For he has neither; while his outward man,
Mien, word, and manner, has no other gloss
Than what the stubborn hand of Nature framed
By mallet and by chisel,—but he is
A character distinct,—I ever love

A man that is so,—many have I known,
And many studied with poetic eye.

Peter is one—the slave of keen sensation.
So obviously affected is his heart
By what he hears and sees, that passion there
Holds everlasting coil,—farther than these,
Peter makes no research,—they are enough
For any heart to brook. I oft have weened,
If Peter neither saw nor heard, he would
Be happier than he is.—What boy is that
At whom you scold so much, said I, good Peter?

Rascal! said he,—he is as great a knave
As wags beneath the sun,—a saucy knave,
Whom I have reared and nourished as my own.
His mother was a vagrant—no good dame,
I ween, was she—She came unto my house
One rainy summer eve, followed by him,
That naughty rogue—a little urchin then,
Not five years old—Brown with the sun he was,

And ragged as a colt!—his head was bare,
And weather-beaten like the tufted moss.

Far, far behind he lagged, for he was lame,
And sore bedraggled,—by his foot still kept
A little dog, his fellow traveller
And bosom friend.—I felt I wot not how
For the young imp, for he came wading on
Through mud and mire, halting most wofully.
The guttered road his sole might not imprint,
For it was wounded, but with dexterous skill
He placed his foot on edge, and ambled thus.—

Then Peter walked across the field and back
With awkward limp, to show me how the boy
Walked out the way;—the fancy pleased him much,
For ever and anon he laughed at it,
And yet the tear was pacing down his cheek.
'Twas just this way he walked, poor soul, said Peter;
And then, with turned-up foot, and gait oblique,
Again he halted lamely o'er the ridge,

Laughing with shrilly voice, and all the while
Wiping his eyes.—I thought I saw, said Peter,
An independence in the child's blue eye,
A soul that seemed determined to outbrave
Reproach and sufferance, and to work his way
Throughout the world, though scarce a ray of hope
Lay onward to allure or beckon him.

His supper with his faithful dog he shared;
To that alone he talked, nor heeded once
The tattle of the menials who assailed him.
Soon he was sound asleep; his dumb companion,
With head laid on his little master's breast,
Fell sound as he.—O it was such a picture
Of generous friendship as I ne'er again
Shall look upon!—Then Peter sobbed full hard,
And told it o'er again,—and then he laid
His head upon his shoulder,—stopped his breath
To shortened pant, and with an open mouth,
And face ludicrously demure, he showed me

The way the poor boy slept, and how the dog!
I could not chuse but laugh, and so did Peter;
For he assured me there was never aught
On earth seen like it,—then a second time
He sniffed in mimic sleep, while from his breast
Issued a feeble dreaming sound of plaint.
That was the very way they slept, said Peter;
I thought my heart would burst—Yet she his mother
Ne'er looked at them—not she—she heeded not.

. . .

I could not sleep a wink that night, said Peter,
Nor could I think of aught but the poor boy,
The little ragged pilgrim of the world!
Poor devil! said I, an hundred times, I ween,
And more,—and then I turned! and turned! and
turned!
. . .
I sighed a prayer for the unfortunate,
And tried to think of others in distress;
I thought that many a fair and comely mother
Shed the salt tear o'er an unfathered boy,

Who, all unconscious, lay upon her breast,
His only shelter, while, alas! that breast
And beauteous head no shelter had at all!
I tried such things to ponder,—'twas in vain!
My thoughts were on the boy,—I saw him still!
The little, sun-burnt, naked ragamuffin!
His round red lip and independent eye!
The tiny conscript on the field of life,
The veteran of eternity!—I wept—
And turned! and turned!—Good God! said I, what's
this?

His tale was never ended, nor would mine
Should I go on, and deftly follow him
Through every maze of feeling,—but the boy
Lives with old Peter,—they have never parted,
Nor ever will till death shall sunder them.
And on my troth, when my old head is laid
Low in the dust, said Peter, I do think
There is not one alive will miss me more,

Or think of me so much as that young knave.
Nor shall he then be destitute, or forced
To prowl in desperate guise throughout the world.
He's a dear boy! a noble generous boy!
But I have spoiled him—all my folk are spoiled.

This is most true,—I walked with Peter forth
Across the winter field, where his one hind
Drew the long furrow, who with lengthened *vo*
And *hie* vociferous urged on his steeds,
And gave harsh tones unto the chilly gale.

It chanced that on the cold wet field we found
A mountain-daisy blooming all alone.
I paused, and spoke of Burns, the Scottish bard:
Peter had heard the name,—I then conned o'er
The lines unto the Daisy in a tone
Most tender and affecting.—Peter looked
As he would look me through,—he could not ween
Of feeling for a flower, and yet he felt

A kind of sympathy, that overpowered
All his philosophy.—He took a stone,
And placed it tall on end.—Herbert, said he,
When thou ploughest down this ridge, spare me this
flower.
I charge thee note it well,—and for thy life
Do it no injury.—Pugh! said the clown,
Such stuff!—I shall not mind it.—He went on
Whistling his tune.—Oh, Peter was most wroth!
He ran in hasty guise around, and looked
For a convenient stone, that he might throw
And smite the ploughman's head.—No one would suit
Then, turning round to me, he gave full vent
To's rage against the hind, and all was o'er.
In his first heat, he cursed the menial race;
I told you they were all alike, said he,
A most provoking and ungracious set;
(Peter had never told *me* such a thing.)
Now did you ever see a wretch like that?
He's a good workman, and he knows it well,

But not one thing that I desire of him
Will he perform—I'm an old fool, 'tis true,
But yet methinks the man that eats my bread
Might somewhat humour me.—I thought so too.
But ah! said Peter, when I think of this,
The freedom of the will, by man so valued,
Is not his own!—and that how proud he is
Sometimes to show it, then I give it him;
And when I do I have not cause to rue.
What a discerning learned man is Peter?
He's nature's genuine, plain philosopher.

That night, at board, Peter sat silent long,
Thoughtful he was.—I think I've heard, said he,
That Burns, of whom you spake, was a bad man,
A man of a most vicious, tainted mind,
Fit to corrupt an age—Was it not so?

Alas! said I, never was man abused
So much as he!—he was a good man, Peter;

A man of noble independent mind,
So high, that wealth's low minions envied it;
Exerting all their malice to assail
His only part that was assailable.
Keen were his feelings, and his passions strong,
Such as your own—The vantage ground was gained.
The foes of genius came, in social guise,
Luring to gusts of blindfold levity
The bard that sore relented.—These were blabbed
With tenfold zest, until the injured heart
Of genius was wrung—It broke!—and then
The foes of humble and inherent worth,
O how they triumphed o'er the Poet's dust!

D—n them! said Peter,—he thrust back his chair,
Dashed one knee o'er the other furiously,
Took snuff a double portion,—swallowed down
His glass at once,—looked all around the room
With wrathful eye—and then took snuff again.

I love old Peter! I would rather see
Nature's strong workings in the human breast,
Than list the endless dogmas which define
Their operations and existing springs.
Peter's a living representative,
A glossary to many terms, that stand
In fair-cast characters upon the page
Of the philosopher,—in other form
To him unknown.—But these are fading all;
Impressed themselves, they no impression leave;
Peter's a stereotype,—that for an age
Will momently throw bold impressions off,
Ever demonstrative, and ever new.
When next I visit him, I'll copy forth
One other page from nature's manual.

END OF PETER OF BARNET.

CARMEN JUDICIALE.

THE

CURSE OF THE LAUREATE.

CARMEN JUDICIALE.

1.

In vale of Thirlemere, once on a time,
When birds sung sweet and flowers were in the spring,
While youth and fancy wantoned in their prime,
I laid me down in happy slumbering;
The heavens in balmy breezes breathed deep,
My senses all were lulled in grateful, joyous sleep.

2.

Sleep had its visions—fancy, all unswayed,
Revelled in fulness of creative power:
I weened that round me countless beings strayed,
Things of delight, illusions of an hour;
So great the number of those things divine,
Scarce could my heart believe that all the imps were mine.

3.

Yet mine they were, all motley as they moved;
Careless I viewed them, yet I loved to view;
The world beheld them, and the world approved,
And blest the train with smiles and plaudits due:
Proud of approval, to myself I said,
From out the group I'll chuse, and breed one favourite maid.

4.

Joan I chose, a maid of happy mien;
Her form and mind I polished with care;

A docile girl she proved, of moping vein,
Slow in her motion, haughty in her air;
Some mentioned trivial blame, or slightly frowned;
Forth to the world she went, her heavenly birth it owned.

5.

The next, a son, I bred a Mussulman;
With creeds and dogmas I was hard bested,
For which was right or wrong I could not tell,
So I resolved my offspring should be bred
As various as their lives—the lad I loved,
A boy of wild unearthly mien he proved.

6.

Then first I noted in my mazy dream
A being scarcely of the human frame,
A tiny thing that from the north did seem,
With swaggering, fuming impotence he came;
I fled not, but I shuddered at his look;
Into his tutelage my boy he took.

7.

Each principle of truth and purity,
And all that merited the world's acclaim,
This fiend misled—nor could I ever free
From his destroying grasp my darling's fame;
But yet I could not ween that heart of gall
Could be a foe to one, whose heart beat kind to all.

8.

My third, a Christian and a warrior true,
A bold adventurer on foreign soil,
And next, his brother, a supreme Hindu,
I reared with hope, with joy, and painful toil.
Alas! my hopes were vain! I saw them both
Reft by an emmet!—crushed before a moth!

9.

Still could I not believe his vengeful spite,
For in his guise a speciousness appeared;

My bitterness of heart I feigned light;
But wholly as he urged my next I reared:
He said of all the gang he was the best,
And wrung his neck before mine eyes in jest.

10.

From that time forth, an independent look,
A bold effrontery I did essay;
But of my progeny no pains I took,
Like lambs I reared them for the lion's prey;
And still as playful forth they passed from me,
I saw them mocked and butchered wantonly.

11.

"Just Heaven!" said I, "to thy awards I bow,
For truth and vengeance are thine own alone;
Are these the wreaths thou deignest to bestow
On bard, whose life and lays, to virtue prone,
Have never turned aside on devious way?
Is this the high reward, to be of fools the prey?"

12.

A laugh of scorn the welkin seemed to rend,
And by my side I saw a form serene;
"Thou bard of honour, virtue's firmest friend,"
He said, "can'st thou thus fret? or dost thou w
That such a thing can work thy fame's decay?
Thou art no fading bloom—no floweret of a day!

13.

"When his o'erflowings of envenomed spleen
An undistinguished dunghill mass shall lie,"
The name of SOUTHEY, like an evergreen,
Shall spread, shall blow, and flourish to the sky;
To Milton and to Spenser next in fame,
O'er all the world shall spread thy laurelled name.'

14.

"Friend of the bard," I said, "behold thou hast
The tears of one I love o'er blushes shed;

Has he not wrung the throb from parent's heart,
And stretched his hand to reave my children's bread?
For every tear that on their cheeks hath shone,
O may that Aristarch with tears of blood atone!"

15.

" If cursing thou delightest in," he replied,
" If rage and execration is thy meed,
Mount the tribunal—Justice be thy guide,
Before thee shall he come his rights to plead;
To thy awards his fate forthwith is given,
Only, be justice thine, the attribute of Heaven."

16.

Gladly I mounted, for before that time
Merit had crowned me with unfading bays.
Before me was brought in that man of crime,
Who with unblushing front his face did raise;
But when my royal laurel met his sight,
He pointed with his thumb, and laughed with all his might.

17.

Maddening at impudence so thorough-bred,
I rose from off my seat with frown severe,
I shook my regal sceptre o'er his head—
" Hear, culprit, of thy crimes, and sentence hear!
Thou void of principle! of rule! of ruth!
Thou renegade from nature and from truth!

18.

" Thou bane of genius!—party's sordid slave!
Mistaken, perverse, crooked is thy mind!
No humble son of merit thou wilt save,
Truth, virtue, ne'er from thee did friendship find;
And while of freedom thou can'st fume and rave,
Of titles, party, wealth, thou art the cringing slave!

19.

" Thou hast renounced Nature for thy guide,
A thousand times hast given thyself the lie,

And raised thy party-curs to wealth and pride,
The very scavengers of poetry.
Thy quibbles are from ray of sense exempt,
Presumptuous, pitiful, below contempt!

20.

"Answer me, viper! here do I arraign
Thy arrogant, self-crowned majesty!
Hast thou not prophesied of dole and pain,
Weakening the arms of nations and of me?
Thou foe of order!—Mercy lingers sick—
False prophet! Canker! Damned heretic!"

21.

Then pointing with my sceptre to the sky,
With vehemence that might not be restrained,
I gave the awful curse of destiny!
I was asleep, but sore with passion pained.
It was a dreadful curse; and to this day,
Even from my waking dreams it is not worn away.

The Curse.

May heaven and earth,
And hell underneath,
Unite to ensting thee
In horrible wrath.
May scorning surround thee,
And conscience astound thee,
High genius o'erpower,
And the devil confound thee.
The curse be upon thee
In pen and in pocket,
Thy ink turn to puddle,
And gorge in the socket;
Thy study let rats destroy,
Vermin and cats annoy,
Thy base lucubrations
To tear and to gnaw,
Thy false calculations
In Empire and Law.

The printers shall harass,
The devil shall dun thee,
The trade shall despise thee,
And C—t—e shun thee.
The judge shall not hear thee,
But frown and pass by thee,
And clients shall fear thee,
And know thee, and fly thee!
I'll hunt thee, I'll chase thee,
To scorn and deride thee,
The cloud shall not cover,
The cave shall not hide thee;
The scorching of wrath
And of shame shall abide thee,
Till the herbs of the desart
Shall wither beside thee.
Thou shalt thirst for revenge
And misrule, as for wine,
But genius shall flourish!
And royalty shine!

And thou shalt remain
While the Laureate doth reign,
With a fire in thy heart,
And a fire in thy brain,
And Fame shall disown thee
And visit thee never,
And the curse shall be on thee
For ever and ever!

END OF CARMEN JUDICIALE.

THE MORNING STAR.

THE MORNING STAR,

OR

THE STEAM-BOAT OF ALLOA.

O BLESSED thing of calm delight,
Art thou a phantom of the night,
That slumberest by the lonely strand,
Dreaming of breeze from Fairy Land?
Well, glorious creature, mayest thou lie
Smiling on the refulgent sky,
For thy heart is calm and motionless,
And the stars shall view thee soon

Sailing in conscious blessedness,
Thou sister of the Moon;
And every garden of the deep,
And orb that shines above,
Shall see thee gliding swift as sleep,
In holiness and love!
Over the scarcely touched wave,
Along the homeless sea;—
O world of waters, the peaceful grave
Ne'er lay entranced like thee!
The Moon hath bidden her radiance fall
On thy rainbow form and viewless wings,
And the heavenly voice of the rocking sea,
In everlasting melody,
To cheer the vision sings.

And well, loved vessel, mayest thou glide
Calm onward without breeze or tide,
With steadfast and unaltered motion,
Along the bright and starry ocean;

For in thy bosom's inmost cells
Some self-impelling spirit dwells,
And thy majestic form is driven
Along the slumbering sea,
As on the peaceful soul of heaven,
Unto Eternity.

And well I know, to a land afar
Thy course is bent, loved Morning Star!
To a blessed haven far away,
Where the mines are deep, and the shores are grey,
Where human things of the loveliest hue,
Dark as the veil o'er the midnight dew,
Toil in the central deep, intent
To supply one sacred element,
Who in their hushed and dim abode
For ever dwell upon their God!

Bright creature! harbinger of love,
In earth below, and heaven above,

How many an anxious eye at morn
Will look from the beach where thou wast borne
To mark thy stately form afar,
And hail the approach of the Morning Star!
And still their faith, with tranced eye,
Shall dwell upon the moonlight sky,
Then turn to the mellow sea beneath,
Serene and calm, as heaven's own breath.

Thou magic journeyer of the even,
Thou self-moved messenger of heaven!
Over the wave, and the still moonbeam,
Or downward in the troubled deep,
Murmuring like giant in a dream,
Or distant thunder, when the gleam
Of fire plays o'er a world asleep!
O thou art bright with beauty and grace!
With many a collier's lovely face,
And forms of holiest joy to man,
Of radiant glorious courtezan!

Those precious things of heaven above,
Whom men and saints and angels love!

A lovelier vision one of these,
Than ever journeyed the moonlight seas,
I now behold upon the prow,
With eyes fixed on the wave below;
So beautiful and calm she seems,
As if her thoughts were heavenly dreams!
One dark fond youth still clings to her,
And their shadows never, never stir,
Save that upon the heaving billow,
The robe of that most lovely thing
Is moving like the gentle willow
Above some sainted spring!

And they are gone, the beauteous twain!
I look to the prow, but I look in vain;
For they are vanished into the deep,
In some dark central dome to sleep;

In some sweet cool-besprinkled cell,
In love, and peace, and joy, to dwell;
And my soul devotes her music wild
To one who is scarce an earthly child.
Softly they lean on each other's breast,
In holy bliss reposing,
Like two fair clouds to the vernal air
In folds of beauty closing.
The tear down their glad faces rolls,
And a silent prayer is in their souls;
And Faith, who oft had lost her power
In the darkness of the midnight hour,
When the planets had rolled afar,
Now stirs in their souls with a joyful strife
Embued with a genial spirit of life,
In the breast of the Morning Star.

O beauteous thing! thou seemest to me
So full of love and harmony,
That thou bestowest a loveliness,

A deeper, holier quietness,
On the moonlight heaven, and ocean hoar,
Than eye of Faith e'er viewed before.
Through the still fount of tears and sighs,
And human sensibilities,
Well may the moon delight to shed
Her softest radiance round that head,
And mellow the coal and the ocean air,
That lifts by fits her sable hair.
These mild and melancholy eyes
Are dear unto the starry skies,
As the dim effusion of their rays
Blends with the glimmering light that plays
O'er the blue heavens, and snowy clouds,
The cloud-like sails, and radiant shrouds.

Fair creature! thou dost seem to be
Some wandering spirit of the sea,
That hither comest, for one wild hour,
With him thy sinless paramour.

To watch, while wearied sailors sleep,
This beautiful phantom of the deep,
That seemed to rise, with the rising Moon,—
But the Queen of Night will be sinking soon!
Then will you, like two breaking waves,
Sink softly to your coral caves,
Or, noiseless as the falling dew,
Melt into Heaven's delicious blue.

Nay wrong her not, that angel bright!
Her face is bathed in lovelier light
Than ever flowed from eyes
Of ocean nymph, or sylph of air!
The tearful gleam that trembles there
From human dreams must rise.
And who is he that fondly presses
Close to his heart the silken tresses
That hide her softened eyes?
Whose heart her heaving bosom meets,
And through the midnight silence beats
To feel her rising sighs?

Worthy the youth, I ween, to rest
On the fair swellings of her breast!
Well do I know that stately youth,
The broad coal-light of clouded truth
Like a sunbeam bathes his face:
Though silent, an unrighteous smile
That rests upon his eyes the while
Bestows a speaking grace:
That smile hath might of magic art,
To sway at will the stoniest heart!—
O happy pair! O ship of love!
Like incense to the realms above
The joys in thee that dwell;
From thee I shall be loath to part!
But when I do, my lingering heart
Will sadly say—Farewell!

END OF THE MORNING STAR.

HYMN TO THE MOON.

HYMN TO THE MOON.

COME forth, sweet spirit! from thy cloudy cave,
Far in the bosom of the starless night,
And, suddenly above the mountain-top
Lifting thy placid beauty, all at once
Spread a still rapture o'er the encircling earth,
That seems just waking from some heavenly dream.

Hail, soft-browed sovereign of the sea and sky!
Thee heaven and all its glories worship—Thee
Worships old Ocean with his million waves,
And though 'mid fleecy clouds as still as snow,

Or the blue depths of stainless sanctity,
Lies thy beloved way—yet often Thou
Art seen careering on a throne of storms,
Seemingly borne on to eternity,
So wild the hurried glimpses of thy face,
Perturbed yet beautiful!

Heardest thou my voi
Stealing along the silent walls of heaven,
And blended softly with the falling dews,
To thine aerial tower? and lookest thou down
With love and pity on thy worshipper,
Even like an angel on the humble saint
Praying on his knees within his rocky cell?

Yes! glorious as thou art and beautiful,
Hanging upon the viewless wings of air,
That, wide-stretched through the amplitude of spa
Winnow fresh fragrance over earth and heaven,
Yet art thou meek and humble as a flower
Buried in the heart of forest solitude!

nd there thou lingerest on the mountain-top
stening my song, that boasts no other charm
ıan gratitude and piety—in peace
ɔnceived within my soul, and peaceful breathed
ɔ thee, the fountain of untroubled joy!

Lo! all the loveliness of earth awakes
ɔ bless and do thee homage. Softly glide
he clouds yet glowing with the crimson light
f the departed sun, to gird their queen
'ith a fair circle of unfallen snow,
et brightened with the innocence of heaven!
'ithin that circle, deeper than the blue,
he tearless blue of an archangel's eye,
listens the eternal sanctitude of rest—
ut comes one single solitary star,
ne moment shining—and then melts away
ı thy o'erpowering radiance, while the heavens
.ll agitated into waves of light
.re like the ocean during breathless nights,

Astir, yet in the swell profoundly calm,
A type of endless, universal rest!

Nor is the earth beneath thee, Queen of Light!
Less lovely than the heavens. Thy smile creates
A dream-like pleasure through the works of God,
And all his blest creation seems more blest
When looking up to thee, and worshipping
Thy shining face with faintly-murmuring songs,
Odours as gentle as the mournful light,
And forms by Melancholy's softest touch
Moulded to beauty, in their depth of rest,
Seeming immortal and unchangeable,
Or ever varying like the breathing mist,
In fluctuations of profoundest peace,
Bordering on mirth—and now in awful trance
Like a dead countenance looking up to heaven,
By heaven rejected.

Lo! thy favourite lake
Hath thrown the mist-veil from her purest breast,

And there thy spirit in a stream of light
Descends, as it would pierce down to the fields,
The woods, and groves, that lie in silentness
Beneath their lucid atmosphere of waves!
The lake is vanished—an abyss of light
Hath swallowed up her waves—and hast thou changed
Thy habitation in the heavens, O Moon!
For a wild dwelling in the glitterance
Of earth-born waters? There thy face appears
Smiling as in thy native element!
I look to heaven, and there thou art likewise—
An apparition! which is the true Moon
I know not—nor can tell—what matters it?
Ye both are beautiful—therefore both, hail,
Now and for ever—first, thou watery Moon,
And then, thou Moon aerial! haply one,
But, whether one or two, still beautiful,
Too beautiful by far not to be viewed,
Waning or full, without a gush of tears!

Where art thou gone? all of a sudden gone?
Why hast thou left thy pensive worshipper
Sitting in the darkness on the mossy stump
Of an old oak-tree?—Hark! the owl! the owl!
He is a living clock that tells the hour
To visionary men who walk by nights
Composing poesy!—And see yon star
Twinkling upon the hill-side! 'Tis the window
Of my sweet cottage,—haply even now
My Mary stirs the fire, while near the hearth
My little babes are playing.—Fare thee well,
Departed Moon, and peace for ever smile
Beside thee in thy interlunar cave!

END OF HYMN TO THE MOON.

THE STRANDED SHIP.

THE STRANDED SHIP.

My spirit dreams of a peaceful bay
Where once a ship in beauty lay;
Floating between the waves and air,
Each glad to claim a thing so fair.
Her white wings to the sunshine gleaming
In anchored rest—bright ensigns streaming,
As if they wished away to fly
From the proud ship which they glorify.
—Alas! her wings no more expanded,
High on the beach the ship is stranded,
And, reft of motion, never more
Must walk above the ocean-roar!

Yet the creatures of the deep, too blest
Within their sunless caves to rest,
In the genial warmth of upper day
Are rolling in unwieldy play,
Or shooting upwards through the light
With arrowy motion silvery bright,
The silent summer air employ
For their region of capricious joy!
While fairy shells in myriads lying,
The smooth hard sand in lustre dyeing,
Encircle with a far-seen chain
Of glory, the most glorious main!
Glad shines the sun upon the wreck,
Warming her cold and lifeless deck;
While through her shrouds with songs of love
Birds glance like harmless lightening,
And majestic hangs the palm-tree grove
Her short and shattered mast above,
Whose ensigns, meteor-like, did move,
The dark green forest brightening.

Who thinks upon her gallant crew?
Oh! far, far down in the coral caves
O'er a hundred heads the sea-flower waves!
Her captain's heart hath long been cold
In the silent night of her watery hold!
And a ghastly troop o'er the dim mainland,
Where Hope ne'er waved her golden wand,
To certain death have gone!
They died!—but when, or how, or where,
Save that in famine and despair,
By man shall ne'er be known!

END OF THE POETIC MIRROR.

MISCELLANIES.

THE RUSSIADDE,

A FRAGMENT OF AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM,

SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY GILBERT HUME,

A SUTOR OF SELKIRK.

BOOK FIRST.

A SONG of sooth and sober sadness,
Of matchless might and motley madness,
Long as the reach of morning lingle
And brisk as blaze of evening ingle,
Begin, my Borough Muse, and sing;
And Janet's wheel, her boldest string
Shall vibrate to thy swelling note,
Of days, and deeds, so long forgot.

In Selkirk, famed in days of yore
For sutors, but for heroes more.
When wont to raise her hundreds duly,
Her sutors then were heroes truly!
And on red Flodden's dreadful day,
When other powerful clans gave way,
And left our king in fatal fray,
The burly sutors firmer stood,
And dyed the field with Southron blood:
Though flanked, and turned, and flanked again,
Still round them rose the walls of slain;
Though galled by darts, by horses trode on,
They bore their standard off from Flodden,
Which still, on that returning day,
We bear aloft in proud array!

My ancient town of hides and rosin!
I'll blow thy foes up by the dozen.
Selkirk! thou earned thy very name
Rekindling Freedom's sacred flame.

When Europe's chiefs all prostrate lay,
Beneath a haughty PONTIFF's sway;
Thou mocked the mighty, blind, alliance,
And Christendom set at defiance:
Dared on his flagrant bulls to trample,
Before King John set the example;
And ere his anathemas ceased,
Sold thy d—d kirk and hanged the priest.

Selkirk, for these exploits so famed,
And hundreds more I have not named,
Shall yet, I hope, in future days,
Raised by her son's romantic lays,
Above all Scottish towns prevail,
As scene of this heroic tale.

Well then; as all old tales began,
"In Selkirk once there lived a man."
But such a man! Ah! shall we ever
Behold his like again? No, never!

His name was John; his trade, 'tis true,
Was boots and shoes to shape and sew.
My muse has so much cant about her—
In short he was a Selkirk sutor.

Genius of Virgil, here inspire me,
That men may read, though not admire me.
Of every method of description,
In verse, or prose, without restriction,
For saying most, and telling least;
Thine is the easiest and the best.

John was a man near six feet high,
Who had a dark, and piercing eye;
His hair and beard were black and bushy,
His nose was high, his brows were brushy.
Large were his limbs, his shoulders broad,
Fitted to bear a mighty load:
Of manly make from crown to sole,
Though his work dress was coarse and dröll.

Such was the man, view him with fears,
He'll turn even worse than he appears.

Alas! how ill ourselves we know!
So much to mark in outward show!
From which 'tis hard the soul to scan—
'Tis that within which forms the man!

John had six sons, of mettle keen
As ever in Selkirk town were seen:
At every feat of strength, or art,
Requiring steady hand or heart;
At breaking brand with Border foe;
Or aiming shaft from hunter's bow,
To wound the erne or mountain roe;
Or piercing salmon in the stream,
Though darting like the lightning's gleam;
Whoever tried to prove their equal,
Were always baffled in the sequel.

Their bread in honesty they earned,
Their father's trade they all had learned;
Yet sooth to say, they never staid
From muster field or Border raid.

In youth, John had a warrior been,
Had many a bloody battle seen,
Yet though his strength was unabated,
Of deeds of death his soul was sated;
And weary of its murderous noise,
He now delighted most in boys;
He'd play with them at bat, or ball,
Or any game they chose to call.
No oath was minced while John was by;
No word spoke angrily, or high;
But each strove to outdo the others
In generous acts, as all were brothers.
So high they valued his esteem,
What he approved they all would seem.

His stall was large and seated round,
There every boy a shelter found,
Even dogs that were ill-used at home,
To this abode of peace would come,
And fawn on all with much affection,
Aye sure to meet a kind reception.

On winter evenings cold and bright,
That stall was crowded every night
With those who loved his minstrelsy,
For many a tale and song had he:
And much he loved to see them all
Silent as squires in courtly hall;
And how their ardour rose, and fell,
As different tales he chose to tell;
What pleasure glowed in every face,
At Robin Hood, or Chevy Chace;
And how it thrilled each stripling's blood,
To hear how Maitland victor stood.

That day their good King James was born,
The boys came all to dine with John.
In four close circles, on the green,
His youthful guests, all neat and clean,
John eyed with pride and high delight;
And in the middle stood upright,
To see that each got ample share
Of homely, healthy, Forest fare.
But none would taste, till John addressing
His Maker, asked on all a blessing.

His night-cap in his coat disposed,
With folded hands and eye-lids closed;
Bent one foot forward from erect,
An attitude of great respect;
With reverend tone, and fervent air,
He thus to God preferred his prayer.

"O! thou who rul'st above the sky,
Yet feed'st the ravens young that cry;

Make grateful us poor worthless sinners,
For this and all our plenteous dinners,
Whilst many better have, nor bread,
Nor house, nor home, to hide their head.
These gifts, so kindly given by thee,
I give to those I love to see.
My God! may every tender breast
With grace and virtue be impressed;
And in whatever state they stand,
May they be honours to our land;
And each fond parent's hope surmised,
In all be fully realized;
Nor ever vice, or lucre, draw
Them off from thee, their king, and law!
May every nation under heaven
Have grace of thee, and sins forgiven:
And mind old Scotland 'mongst the rest;
And be thy name for ever blessed."

No morning dawned on Ettrick fair,
That John did not begin with prayer;

No evening closed on his abode,
He did not close with thanks to God!
In each man's joy he bore a part,
And each man's sorrow wrung his heart.

O! how can language paint the distance,
'Twixt such a life and mere existence!
How many eat, drink, sleep, and then
Just eat and drink to sleep again;
And lose the fragrance of the morn
For qualms, by base intemperance born!

Others employ the immortal mind
To wrest and vex the human kind:
Foul slander, spite, and litigation,
Are all their aim and meditation;
And nought so well repay their labours,
As losses which affect their neighbours.
And he whom Fortune sore hath crushed,
They joy to humble in the dust;
Nought left in life wherein to trust!

The partial law of substance fleeces,
And these his good name tear to pieces.

Another loves to rob and plunder;
O'er fields of death to guide the thunder;
And still his fev'rish mind is brewing
How to arise on others' ruin.
The nation's groan, for pity crying,
The fields are heaped with dead and dying!
No qualm of conscience! no disgust!
For power and rule is all his lust.
But thanks to Him who rules on high,
And lightens nature with his eye,
That few such monsters, very few
On earth these ravages renew.
Two such within an age, are sure
As much as mankind can endure,
And God in mercy oft sends fewer.

But when stern Death, with look determined,
Approaches grim,—the mind, in ferment,

Views worlds beyond the grave aghast,
And fearful glancing o'er the past,
No action to insure the future!
Who would not then be John the Sutor?
And with him rather take their chance,
Than with the Pope or King of France?

" But, Muse, you promised me a story:
Leave off your prosing, I implore thee;
Page after page I here have wrote,
And all the length that I have got,
Is just no more, nor farther, than,
In Selkirk once there lived a man.
If thus you wind and wind about her,
I'll ne'er get on with John the Sutor."

Well, well, my master, I obey thee,
Where left I off my story, pray thee?
But 'tis so good, and so sublime,
I'll tell it o'er a second time.

I said, as all old tales began,
In Selkirk once there lived a man:
Mentioned his name, and recreations,
His sons, their might, and occupations:
I hate description's meagre art,
And love a tale with all my heart;
And this that I am going to tell
John said (and I believe it well)
Was strictly true. But who can doubt o't?
It bears 't upon the very snout o't,
And proved to Selkirk boys a feast
Full twenty times a-year at least.

Once on a day, in Mercia's bound,
There lived a man for might renowned,
His name was Russell; but in sport,
Or else, because the name was short,
Men called him Russ: no doubt, his name
You oft have heard, and wondrous fame.

So great his strength, that, in this age,
The truth no credit will engage.
The pine, that on the mountain grew,
With ease up from its hold he drew:
Huge rocks, which mortals ne'er had shoved,
Nor ever thought to be removed,
From Eildon's proud vermilioned brow
He dashed upon the plain below.
Once by a furious bull o'erthrown,
Quite unawares, and all alone;
A bull, for strength of horn and hide,
Unequalled on the Border side;
Russ rose, renewed the rough attack,
And tossed him fairly on his back!
Carved with his sword ('tis truth I tell ye)
Saint Andrew's cross on his broad belly:
He rolled, he bellowed, torn with pain,
Then groaned to death upon the plain!
If this is not heroic writing,
I give the palm up for inditing.

In small affray, stout men a score
Would sink, or fly his fist before.
But in a reg'lar field of blood,
Unarmed, impatient, still he stood:
He never missed, at the first blow,
To break his sword or cleave his foe.

One day Laird Coom beheld him stand
Amid the ranks with hilt in hand;
And brought him mighty goad of steel,
Meant for a belt to waggon wheel,
Which Russell quickly heaved on high,
While pleasure lightened in his eye.
Wo to the man was nigh that day!
He mowed the Southrons down like hay;
Nor once perceived, that, as he drew
Each stroke, as many Scots he slew.
The English saw, and stooping low,
Evited oft the dreadful blow,

Which coming round withouten stay,
Aye swept whole ranks of Scots away:
Laird Coom came up, and d—n'd and swore,
" Hold, Russ; for love of Christ give o'er,
Your club is dyed with kinsmen's blood,
You do ten times more ill than good."

But Russ, this great and wondrous man,
A hero was more ways than one:
Perhaps no mortal e'er so far
Excelled in that called Venus' war.
Through all the country flew his fame,
Myriads of fair he overcame;
And then for children (precious things)
He beat the Turks or Persian kings!

It happened ill, it happened worse,
(Men's joys too often earn a curse!)
Two lovely sisters fell to crying—
Their parents thought the girls were dying:

Sent for the bishop, then beside them
Sung psalms, and prayed for grace to guide them.
For sooth, the bishop said, 'twas hard
If two such flowers should not be spared
To bloom a while in youthful beauty,
And patterns prove of filial duty;
That so much love and harmless frolic
Should be cut off by windy cholic!
Two doctors then in haste are sent for,
Who came well furnished at a venture,
And eased the maids with little bustle;
But ah! the blame fell sore on Russell.
For the goodman, in one short hour,
Instead of twain, as heretofore,
Of daughter, grandchild, brother, cousin,
Could now count o'er the round half dozen.

The church, the law, are up in arms,
Fear for his champion Coom alarms.

By heavens, said he, my noble fellow,
You must escape, ere they compel you
Before their court to stand your trial,
And drink of death the bitterest vial
If once you come within their power,
Not distant is your dying hour.
Coom loved the man, plain be it spoken,
He was a shield not easily broken;
And Lady Coom, that lovely creature,
The sweetest work of wayward nature!
Would rather all her lands and rents,
Her turrets, domes, and battlements,
And her old laird in death were dubbed,
Before her favourite Russ was snubbed.
This must be noted to be plain,
A laird's wife was called lady then.

This champion, this most wondrous youth,
Had foresight of right stunted growth,

So short, that, as the proverb goes,
He scarcely saw before his nose.
The lady gave her favourite horse;
A sword, a lance, and heavy purse;
And bade him ride, nor make a stand,
Till in the midst of Cumberland;
And she would soon, for his mischance,
Remission gain from Rome or France.

Away rode Russ, for England bound,
Swift as in chase of hawk or hound;
Dash went the steed through mire and ford,
Without or spur or cheering word,
For he was proven of mettle keen,
And oft had in the foray been.
Three miles, at least, thus Russell flew,
When rose a humble cot in view,
Where dwelt a damsel, fair and gay
As e'er was meadow-flower in May.

Russ knew her well, she was so good,
So gentle, and so kind of mood,
He could not pass, but lighted down—
His haste was o'er, his fear was flown.
Fear, said I? that ne'er reached his heart,
Except for thirst or hunger's smart.

Russ spent the day, and eke the night,
In raptures of supreme delight.
Unhappy man, his passions fooled him!
The impulse of the moment ruled him!
There sat he, trifling, toying, laughing;
The blood-red wine in torrents quaffing,
Till next day's sun the hills illumines,
All thoughtless of the church's summons.

The country heard, the country ran,
Resolved to catch the sinful man,
And his huge bulk to jelly boil
In caldron of offensive oil.

Russell's brave courser neighed in stall;
His sword and lance were hung in hall,
If hall it could be called, where smoke
Brooded condense o'er hearth of rock:
One only room the house contained,
Where Russell and his flower remained.

His courser first the mob secured,
And next his lance, and trusty sword;
Then rushed they in, while fierce before
Gleamed halbert, pitchfork, and claymore;
And loud they raised the dreadful cry,
"Yield! yield thee, sinner! yield or die!"

Bold Russ sprung up, the table held
Before him as a general shield,
And swore by man's congenial mother
He'd neither do the one nor the other.

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

And then, at once to end their fears,
They fired the house about his ears.
Russ coughed, and sneezed, and rubbed his eyes,
As clouds of smoke began to rise.
"What! shall I like a dolt," said he,
"Be smoked to death, like silly bee?
Nor once my utmost vigour prove,
To save myself, and save my love?
Come, follow me, I'll clear a path,
Or like a hero yield my breath."

The bolts and bars like reeds he tore,
The door from off its hinges bore,
And like the cloud-struck ocean wave,
That hurls the Tar to watery grave;
So on the crowd our hero bore,
While cowl and mitre sunk before.

But though the door was breast-plate strong,
And crushed at first the opposing throng;

Although a shield of sure defence,
It would not wield to any sense,
But flapped as slowly to the ground
As arm of wind-mill in its round.
The door away in rage he threw,
And looked around for weapon true;
For sword or lance he [illegible]d not hover,
He knew, one stroke, and these were over.

But time was precious, for the train
Were rallying to the strife amain;
What weapon Russ chose in his haste,
No human foresight will suggest,
Nor mind approve—withouten jest
It was a lean and sordid priest,
That chanced among his feet to lie,
Not dead, but in extremity.

Him by the heels he roughly drew,
And soon in air his reverence flew

With rapid whirl, and broken howls,
Pouring destruction on their souls;
All those on whom the strokes alighted
Sunk calmly down, in death benighted.
Of every mace, or sword, in field red,
That Russell e'er before had wielded,
None ever wrought such dreadful doom
As did this limb of papal Rome.
The monks and peasants mixed were lying,
The field was strewed with dead and dying;
The rest from ravage so uncivil
Fled, swearing Russell was the devil.

Our hero gazed all thoughtful,—drew
One hand across his dripping brow;
The other still above his breast
Held by the heel the mangled priest;
In case of more malignant foes,
That weapon he wished not to lose.

The news spread o'er the Morea like fire;
The people all were roused to ire,
And flocked in crowds from east and west,
Our hero quite to circumvent;
And either bind his hands and feet,
Or pierce him through with arrows fleet.

Still stood bold Russell, all alone;
His steed and armour both were gone!
He tried to reason, but his thought
In vain was called, in vain was sought;
'Twas gone!—evanished in the blast
Of toils and pleasures newly past.
Nought could he settle, nothing frame,
Save travelling back the way he came.

Short then had been his span of life,
For thousands hastened to the strife,
Had not dame Venus, from the sky,
Beheld him with a pitying eye;

And hasted, on celestial wing,
Her favourite hero off to bring.

Russ saw, descending full in view,
Something like swan or white sea-mew,
Swift as the eagle of the main,
Or red bolt reeling through the rain,
Which lighting on the level nigh,
Russ chanced to turn a curious eye.

But how surprised was he, to see
A nymph come smiling o'er the lea;
Straight as the stateliest pine that grows,
And fresh as bosom of the rose;
Taper and round was every limb,
Her waist was short—not over slim:
The veil, o'er her fair bosom thrown,
Though muslin of the sky, seemed brown!
Never did air become so well!
Never did form so sweetly swell!

Her sweet ripe lips of rosy hue,
Her speaking eye so soft and blue;
Her locks light waving as she run,
Like yellow clouds before the sun;
Her blushes sly, that went and came,
Set Russell's gallant heart on flame.
"Brave youth," she said, "cheer up thy heart;
I cannot bear with thee to part;
For me and mine thou hast done more
Than ever Scotsman did before.
Say, wilt thou leave this field of blood,
And go with me for ill or good?"

Russell looked sly, with sheepish grin,
His heart-strings thrilled his breast within!
"Yes, Madam, yes; be 't ill or well,
By Heaven I'll follow thee to Hell!"

"Then come along," she quick replied,
"Your foes approach on every side;

Come on my back without delay,
I'll bear thee from their rage away."

" What! on your back?—indeed! indeed!
Madam, you'll make but sober speed.
Come on your back!—use you so ill!
No, curse me, Madam, if I will."

" Thou art my champion," she replied,
" And whether well or woe betide,
Thou'st given thy word, thou'st given thy oath,
And Russell, thou shalt keep them both:
Yes; soon shalt thou of wonders tell,
Seen in the farthest nook of hell.
Come, haste thee, see, thy foes are near;
An hundred shafts are pointed here,
All waiting but the twang of string
In thy brave blood to wet the wing.
Thou art my hope, my only care,
I'll bear thee through the yielding air,

Through bowels of the earth and sea,
And every danger shield from thee.
The rainbow's lovely arch we'll climb;
Sail on yon saffron cloud sublime;
Then souse, our panting breasts to lave,
In ocean's green and shelvy wave,
Till in Breadalbane's deepest dell,
Where this green world is but a shell,
An easy passage there I know
Down to the dismal shades below.
Come, haste, we have no time to stay,
I'll bear thee from this mob away."

Russell's dull reason found her household
Of crude ideas all bamboozled!
Of all that speech, from end to end,
One word he could not comprehend;
But stood with head on shoulder leaning,
As striving to conceive her meaning.

Then by the wrists she griped him fast,
And lightly o'er her shoulders cast;
Clasped his huge fists around her bosom;
Bade him hold fast lest she should lose him;
Then, swift as heron or curlew,
Began to scale the ether blue.
No other hold beneath the sky
Could have induced bold Russ to fly;
He was so high too ere he knew,
That, though he soon began to rue,
For fear of rocks, and rails below,
He durst not for his soul let go.

They entered soon a thunder cloud,
When Russell shrunk, and sighed as loud
As if the dame had popped him in
An icy river to the chin;
And held a gripe like grisly death,
Till Venus almost lost her breath.

The sights that there our hero saw,
Were far surpassing reason's law.
He saw the royals of the sky
Play off their dread artillery!
A thousand warriors, tall and grim,
Plied in the cloud so dark and dim;
Loading their guns of monstrous frame,
With bowls of elemental flame.
A spectre colonel, tall and grey,
Bawled out the order, "fire away."
Crash went the bolts, in thunder borne!
The bosom of the cloud was torn!
The earth was bored, the rocks were riven,
And scarcely 'scaped the halls of heaven!
The rude concussion broke so high,
It jingled the windows of the sky.
Russ every moment was in dread
The burning bolts would singe his head;
Or that the tubes would interpose,
And break his forehead or his nose;

But rolling sulphur, hail, and flame,
All oped before the lovely dame.—
Well done, my Muse, by that same rule
Virgil's a prosing drivelling fool.

Far up the welkin now they wind,
And leave the speckled world behind.
Russ never saw a scene so fair
As Scotland from the ambient air;
O'er valleys clouds of vapour rolled,
While others beamed in burning gold;
And stretching far and wide between,
Were fading shades of fairy green.
The glassy sea that round her quakes,
Her thousand isles and thousand lakes,
Her mountains, frowning o'er the main,
Her waving fields of golden grain!
On such a scene, so sweet, so mild,
The radiant sunbeam never smiled.
Let him who dares my lay asperse,
Try match a Selkirk sutor's verse.

As up the firmament he flew,
Still less and less the island grew;
At length, as on a map unfolded,
He looked on half the globing world,
Where oceans rolled and rivers ran,
To bound the sins of sinful man.

Russ looked above, he looked below,
But one from the other could not know;
Knew neither east, west, up nor down,
Which was the earth, or which the moon,
Each seemed the same, in each degree,
And each seemed high and low as he:
His senses all began to vary,
He felt a strange and bad quandary.

"Bless me," said Russ, "where are we now?
Madam, why all this great ado?
If for Breadalbane's bounds thou bearest,
Thou'rt going round to seek the nearest;

Besides, the air's become so rarefied,
For breath my bosom must be scarified.
Keep from the moon, I humbly pray,
Else there I shall be forced to stay;
The attraction's strong, and I'm so heavy,
That doubtless you'll be forced to leave me."

Dame Venus laughed, yet was afraid
It might prove just as Russ had said;
And round her atmosphere so blue
Took of the moon a distant view
Russ saw his sinful countryman
Beneath his burden groaning wan,
Who to the moon was whipped up one day,
For stealing sticks upon a Sunday.
He saw, besides, an iron gate,
At which a hungry colt did wait;
Over the spikes his nose was lying,
And Russell thought he whiles was neighing.

The new moon glowed in all her charms,
Yet clasped the old moon in her arms,
Much like himself and lovely dame:—
All this he saw, then off they came.

He was so near the ample sky,
Its plain he fairly could espy;
Whether 'twas made of crystal blue,
Or bottle-glass, he scarcely knew;
But 'twas the one, and he could prove it;
The stars were lamps that burnt above it;
The sun a fire that flamed amain,
On which the coals were showered like rain.
And when the damps rose from below,
A haze upon this glass would grow,
Till little seraphs scrubbed it clean,
Then fire and lamps again were seen.
On polar swivel it kept its twirl,
And swept around with rapid whirl;

Thus sun and stars about were borne;
That these were facts Russ could have sworn.

They reached this nether world again,
Just in the middle of the main:
Sweet Venus' bosom beat so high
With her huge burden through the sky,
She hovered low, her limbs to lave
Slight on the bow of emerald wave;
Each billow tipt, her breast to cool,
Like swallow on the evening pool,
While trembling sailors shunned the track
Of dolphin on the mermaid's back.

Some roguish tricks she next began,
Floating on wave like buoyant swan;
Light o'er the billows heaved on high,
Then sunk between from human eye.
Russ capered sore, with phiz uncouth,
He shut his eyes, he shut his mouth,

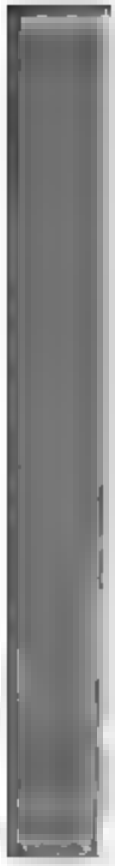
Expecting every wave that broke,
With brine his bellows-pipe would choke.

Sly Venus laughed, then dived below,
The wonders of her power to show:
Russ from the lady durst not sever,
But thought he then was gone for ever;
Then first his heart perceived alarms
For the effects of female charms.

No, Russell, no—the lovely creatures
Have nought malicious in their natures.
If woman's gentle heart you gain,
True to the last she will remain;
Nor danger, poverty, nor pride,
Nought, nought will drive her from thy side:
Though *fickle's* buckled to her name,
Our sex for ever are to blame.

Soon on the channels of the tide
Sat Russell and his lovely guide,
He felt as light, and breathed as pure,
As in the glens of Lammermuir.
But here my Muse her breath must draw,
Before she sing what Russell saw.

END OF BOOK FIRST.



THE RUSSIADDE.

BOOK SECOND.

THE RUSSIADDE.

BOOK SECOND.

RECLINED upon a coral bed,
With oceans rolling o'er his head,
With beauty slumbering on his breast,
Our wondering hero lies at rest.
The swinging sun, far, far away,
Poured through the sea his silver ray,
And shed the softest shade of light;
'Twas neither noontide blaze nor night.

No swelling surge, nor floating foam,
Approached that calm and peaceful home!

So soft the undulation played,
'Twas like the eve in twilight shade;
It only heaved, with gentle flow,
The scarf from Venus' breast of snow;
Her gown that floated fair and dry,
The lily texture of the sky,
It scarcely waved from side to side,
So slight, so gentle, was the tide!

Sweet Venus slept, or seemed to sleep,
Calm in the bosom of the deep;
Her cheek reclined on Russell's arm,
That cheek so rosy, pure, and warm!
She sighed!—she oped her eyes so blue,
On Russell's face of manly hue;
Her arm was careless o'er him flung;
His name played slightly on her tongue.
For why should it mysterious seem
The Queen of Love of love should dream?

Brave Russell's heart was like to melt!
True love he ne'er before had felt.
Love, pure as purest cryst'lization,
The sweetest, fondest, admiration.

Russ lay and viewed, with curious eye,
The little fishes wandering by:
He saw the sprat the ocean bore;
The herring ply her scarlet oar;
All hovered round their ample room
To gaze on beauty's bonniest bloom.
All looks of joy and pleasure cast,
And made obeisance as they past.

They rose, they wandered, hand in hand,
O'er wreathed beds of silver sand;
Saw sheets of glossy amber shine,
Pure as the topaz of the mine;
And rows of pearl, reflecting gay
The sunbeam through the watery way;

Saw bones of men, that long had lain
Calm in the bosom of the main;
So long that coral round them grew,
And sullen gems of dusky hue;
On samphire beds they soundly slept,
And green sea-holly o'er them wept.

Russ met the maidens of the sea,
And joined their gleesome revelry:
In golden vase his bulk they bathed,
And softest down-cloth round him swathed;
Combed his brown locks with diamond comb,
And led him through their crystal dome,
Where stars of heaven, the sun and moon,
Seemed blazing in the grand saloon.
Then sung the music of the sea,
A wild and simple melody,
So sweet, that sea-nymphs round them danced,
And wondering fishes fell entranced;

Even lovely Venus heaved a sigh,
While tears stood trembling in her eye.

Wild pleasure Russell's bosom shook,
'Twas more than human heart could brook;
A lay of heaven the song did seem,
Or vision of a morning dream.
He could not longer bear its charms,
But clasped the sea-maid in his arms,
Caressed her fondly on his knee,
Hung on her lips in ecstasy.

O'er dazzling gems their course they keep,
To view the fountains of the deep;
Those mighty springs that rise so low,
And never, never cease to flow,
That ocean with her brine supply,
Ne'er seen before by human eye.
They rushed so fierce, and swelled so high,
The top Russ scarcely could descry,

But thought the boil was full as great
As Ruber's-law, or Arthur's-seat.

Two giants stood on either side,
With naked arms, and shovels wide,
With horrid eyes, and aspects dun,
Dashing in salt, tun after tun.

He saw these salt-works of the sea,
Contrived and built most curiously;
With kettle, which kept boiling still,
As large as any Highland hill.
What boiled that vat Russ could not tell,
But feared it was the fire of hell.

Russ was a fisher good and keen,
At many a bout on Tweed had been,
And still he kept an eager eye
On every large one swagging bye.

Not all his lovely guide could say,
Could keep him from so great a prey.

Once, as she wandered pensive on,
She turned, and saw that Russ was gone;
Shouted his name, and walking back,
She found him hasting on her track:
Below one arm he held a seal,
In the other hand a monstrous eel.

No frown was on her lovely brow,
But yet she looked, Russ wist not how;
So sly that look, so arch her smile,
He feared her, yet he loved the while.
Around his neck her arm she threw,
Soft rolled her eyes, so mild and blue!
"My love," said she, "what's this I see?
O haste, and set the prisoners free."

Russ blushed, obeyed, gave her his arm—
All was forgot!—it was no harm—
So gentleness will ever sway,
And mankind its behests obey;
While sour regret, or angry scowl,
Must adverse make the generous soul.

Dwells there a heart in manly breast
Can baulk a lady's kind request?
Ah, never! He that can deny
When beauty pleads with speaking eye,
Let never Muse his sorrows weep,
Nor beauty in his bosom sleep.

These glowing shoals delight no more;
She fixed our hero as before,
And up the green wave 'gan to fly,
Swift as the arrow cleaves the sky;
And, near the sea-beat shore of May,
Sprung from the sea to upper day.

They past Edina's hills of dew,
And spires that bored the welkin blue;
O'er thundering Devon veering hung;
A rainbow arch o'er the Ochels flung;
The western border of the sky
Was fringed with folds of purple dye,
And just as sunk the evening sun
Beyond Glen-Orchy's mountains dun,
They lighted on a lonely lea,
Beneath Breadalbane's greenwood tree.

Obsequious to their lovely Quèen,
Of vernal birch and willow green
The wood-nymphs there had formed a bower,
Twisted with every forest flower.
And in that bower there was a bed,
With silken sheets so well down spread,
While round its posts were seen to twine
The gelder-rose and eglantine.

Before that bed a table stood,
Wove of the twigs from Highland wood,
Where viands rich in goblets shine,
And golden flasks of purple wine.
Russ seldom wondered, no, not he,
At what he wont to hear or see;
But this sweet lady's wondrous skill,
Who thus had every thing at will;
Who travelled, without fear or pain,
The hidden channels of the main;
Could climb the air so light and boon;
So merrily ring the silver moon;
Or scoop the bending sky amain,
And frill above the glowing wain;—
Her might, her power, her condescension,
Were all above his comprehension.
Yet well assured, nor guile, nor pride
Beneath so sweet a guise could hide,
Bold he resolved, by night or day,
To venture where she led the way.

A bower so sweet, a dame so fair,
So soft, so pleasing every air,
Might well the stoutest heart have foiled,
Where love had burned, and passion boiled,
And for one night a supper spoiled.
Not so with Russ, his thirst was great,
He ate so long, he drank so late,
That wearied Venus wished to lie,
And to the green bed turned her eye.

O wine! what canst thou not perform!
The proudest heart thy fumes can storm!
Before thy power have vanished duty,
Pride, native worth, and blooming beauty!
The plaints of conscience thou canst hush,
Reave from the cheek the burning blush;
With passions wild the soul inflame,
And arm the tongue with words of shame:
Oh, that the tree where grape first grew,
Had never drunk the vernal dew!

Russ sat so long, and drank so deep,
Reckless of beauty's needful sleep,
That, loud as note of bugle-horn,
Or gander's trumpet of the morn,
He bawled the catch of boisterous glee,
Hurtful to grace and modesty.
Within one fist he kept, in glow,
Sweet Venus' bonny hand of snow;
The other waved in air aloft,
Or sunk adown to measure soft.
But no approving look, nor smile,
Beamed on her lovely face the while!
Oh fye! that man to modest love
Should e'er so rude a recreant prove!
He looked around, his flower was gone,
And Russ was forced to sleep alone.

Short was the night, the silence deep,
Soft was the bed, and sound his sleep;

And morn had shed her brightest beams,
Ere Russ awoke from wondrous dreams.

" Prepare thee, Russ," fair Venus said,
" Prepare thee for the infernal shade;
Ere eve, before thine eyes I'll show
The wonders of the world below,
Where lanes of fire for ever burn,
And souls in woe eternal mourn."

Russ scanned his thoughts with proper care,
What way he should himself prepare;
The fire was upmost in his mind,
And fire he knew to thirst inclined:
He drank one pint, to cool his tongue,
And two large flasks at 's belt he slung,
Filled with the pure and purple wine,
From vintage of Elysian vine.

" Lead on," said Russ—" though dark the way,
Hid from the glorious eye of day,

If flaming fire and smouldering smoke
Do not thy servant fairly choke;
Lead on, sweet Madam, thou shalt see
How firmly he'll abide by thee."

Short way they went, ere Venus stood
Still in a lonely hazel wood;
And pointing to an ivyed rock,
Whence issued slender sleys of smoke,
Bade Russ observe a little door,
By which their way they should explore.

"That road," said she, "is strait and drear,
But none from Scotland 's half so near.
'Twill save the ferry over Styx,
A golden gift—a thousand tricks;
And, without question, bribe, or riddle,
We'll enter hell just in the middle.

"Have you not heard within this bound,
How earthquakes rock the groaning ground?

How lakes and rivers rolling high
Retreat, and leave their channels dry?
Old Satan then—that savage cruel,
Gets in his new supplies of fuel,
And flings it on with hand unsparing,
Roasting his inmates past all bearing,
Which shakes this lower vault of hell,
For here the world is but a shell.
My wonder would have very small been
If great M'Nab and proud Breadalbane,
With all their silver lakes and fountains,
Their waving woods and hoary mountains,
Their towers and plains of purple heather,
Had sunk all plump in hell together."
" Perhaps," said Russ, " should this befall them,
Their lakes might serve them most of all then."

Fair Venus stooped; the ivy shed,
Then thrusting in her beauteous head,

Called out to Russ to follow nigh,
Then vanished from his gazing eye.
Russ thrust his head and shoulders in,
Then stuck as fast as sutor's pin;
For the wine flasks, where was his trust in,
He could not leave, nor pull, nor thrust in;
Then loud he roared down from the dingle,
With voice that made all hell to jingle,
"I cannot come should I be cowed for't;
Lord, do you think a man's a mowdwort?"

Russ heard a voice so sweet before him,
Its tones were like to overpower him,
And sore he dreaded she was gone,
While moving forward there was none.
Then, with a force nought could gainsay,
He pulled himself back to the day,
Flung all imped'ments to the wind,
And swung his flasks on straight behind.

" Now, friends," said he, " I have you hollow,
Where I can go you needs must follow."
Then, like a valiant pioneer,
His downward course he straight did steer,
Holding his way in darksome furrow,
Beneath the Highland hills to burrow,
And seek, through floods of fire and scathe,
The knowledge of a world beneath.

It chanced that on their downward way
They crossed the channels of Loch Tay,
A scene that Russ took great delight in,
It was so cool and so inviting;
And more than that, the view so goodly
Made his heart pant and play full proudly;
For there were rocks, and trees, and shades,
And kilted hinds, and Highland maids
Swinging above him, lightsome hearted,
Quite unconcerned, though all inverted:

It was such sport, from out the deep
To see the girls hang on the steep,
Fresh as rock-roses of the even,
With crowns on earth and heels to heaven!
And tall Ben-Lawers, that mighty hill,
To every wave kept nodding still,
Bending his poll of grizzly green
As if he bade these dames good-e'en.
Russ laughed till both his sides were shaking;
Kenmore and Comrie both were quaking;
Their inmates fled with maniac capers,
And put an earthquake in the papers.

Then there were trouts went scudding by,
Viewing bold Russ with jealous eye;
And gaping pike that made him shudder;
And salmon with the silver rudder;
Charr busied in profound researches,
And eels, and hurkle-backed perches.

Ha! how sly Russell's heart was beating
To have them catched and fried for eating;
For little knew he what was doing,
Or how they fared, where he was going.

Again they left the beams of day,
And downward on their devious way
They bored along, through mines of brimstone,
Of copper, and of glorious limestone,
So calculated for manure
Through all the Merse and Lammermuir.
But all the way our bold bog-trotter
Met no one but a gloomy otter,
That in these hollow caves his birth takes,
And shakes his ears, and raises earthquakes;
And that vile otter many a year
Has kept those quaking bounds in fear.

At length Russ heard some humming noises,
Far onward, like a thousand voices;

And as he near and nearer drew,
The voices loud and louder grew;
And, as he thought, they all were snarling,
Ranting and roaring, drinking, quarrelling:
"Come then," thinks Russ, "that's not amiss;
I like a stirring place like this."

With that Dame Venus spoil'd a deal,
And straight there issued such a roar
Of howls, and moans, and voices mingled,
That Russell's ears they jarred and jingled.
He started, and inquired what this was?
Said he, "'Tis sure a Berwick Christmas,
At which the motley countless throng
Sing all at once, each his own song;
And when they talk, 'tis such a blether!
They speak so loud, and all together."

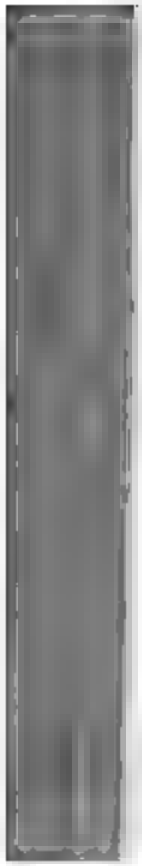
But here my second stroke I'll draw,
Before I tell what Russell saw;

For it must strike each one's conception,
That of that place the full description,
Where are so many volunteer folk,
With crabbed, quizzical, and queer folk,
Rude, railing, recreant, and wrong folk,
Must take a whole book and a long book.

My Muse, so full of mirthful moods,
Delights in lengthened interludes;
But ere she can review the legions
Throughout the red infernal regions,
'Twill make her sigh and look about her,
And hasten back to John the Sutor,
With whom I promise you some fun,
And precept too, ere all be done.

END OF BOOK SECOND.

THE LIDDEL BOWER.



THE LIDDEL BOWER;

A BALLAD.

"O WILL ye walk the wood, lady?
Or will ye walk the lea?
Or will ye gae to the Liddel Bower,
An' rest a while wi' me?"

"The deer lies in the wood, Douglas,
The wind blaws on the lea;
An' when I gae to Liddel Bower
It shall not be wi' thee."

"The stag bells on my hills, lady,
The hart but and the hind;
My flocks lie in the Border dale,
My steeds outstrip the wind.

"At ae blast o' my bugle horn
A thousand tend the ca',—
O gae wi' me to Liddel Bower—
What ill can thee befa'?

"D'ye mind when in that lonely bower
We met at even tide,
I kissed your young an' rosy lips,
An' wooed you for my bride?

"I saw the blush break on your cheek,
The tear stand in your ee;
O could I ween, fair Lady Jane,
That then ye looedna me?"

"But sair, sair hae I rued that day,
An sairer yet may rue;
Ye thoughtna on my maiden love,
Nor yet my rosy hue.

"Ye thoughtna on my bridal bed,
Nor vow nor tear o' mine;
Ye thought upon the lands o' Nith,
An' how they might be thine.

"Away! away! ye fause leman,
Nae mair my bosom wring,
There is a bird within yon bower,
O gin ye heard it sing!"

Red grew the Douglas' dusky cheek,
He turned his eye away,
The gowden hilt fell to his hand;
"What can the wee bird say?"

" It hirpled on the bough an' sang,
'O wae's me, dame, for thee,
An' wae's me for the comely knight
That sleeps aneath the tree!

" 'His cheek lies on the cauld cauld clay,
Nae belt nor brand has he;
His blood is on a kinsman's spear;
O wae's me, dame, for thee!' "

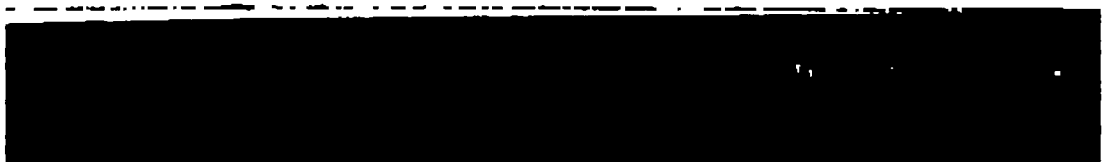
" My yeomen line the wood, lady,
My steed stands at the tree;
An' ye maun dree a dulefu' weird,
Or mount and fly wi' me."

What gars Caerlaverock yeomen ride
Sae fast in belt an' steel,
What gars the Jardine mount his steed,
An' scour owre muir and dale?

Why seek they up by Liddel ford,
An' down by Tarras linn?
The heiress o' the lands o' Nith
Is lost to a' her kin.

O lang, lang may her mother greet,
Down by the salt sea faem,
An' lang, lang may the Maxwells look,
Afore their bride come hame.

An' lang may every Douglas rue,
An' ban the deed for aye:—
The deed was done at Liddel Bower
About the break of day.



SONGS.

SONGS.

I.

MARY IS MY ONLY JOY.

AIR—"*Is fallain gun dith thainig thu.*"

MARY is my only joy,
Mary is blithe and Mary is coy,
Mary's the gowd where there's nae alloy;
Though black—yet O she's bonnie,
Her breath is the birken bower o' spring,
Her lips the young rose opening,
And her hair is the hue of the raven's wing;
She's black, but O she's bonnie.

Though black, yet O sweet mine.
In yon green wood there is a bower:
Where lies a bed of witching power:
Under that bed there blooms a flower:
That steals the heart unwary.

O there is a charm, and there is a spell,
That, O and alack! I know too well,—
A pang that the tongue may hardly tell,
Though felt both late and early!
The beauteous flower beneath the tree,
The spell of the wildest witchery,
The gowd and the gear, and all to me,
Is my black but my bonnie Mary.

II.

I HAE LOST MY JEANIE, O.

AIR—"*Lady Cunningham's Delight.*

O, I hae seen when fields were green,
An' birds sae blithe an' cheerie, O,
How swift the day wou'd pass away
When I was wi' my dearie, O.
My heart's now sair, my elbows bare,
My pouch without a guinea, O;
I'll never taste o' pleasure mair,
Since I hae lost my Jeanie, O.

O Fortune, thou hast used me ill;
Far waur than my deserving, O;
Thrice owre the crown thou'st knocked me down,
An' left me hauflins starving, O:

Thy roughest blast has blawn the last,
My lass has used me meanly, O;
Thy keenest dart has pierced my heart,
An' ta'en frae me my Jeanie, O.

I'll nae mair strive, while I'm alive,
For aught but missing slavery, O;
This world's a stage, a pilgrimage,
A mass o' guilt an' knavery, O:
If fickle fame but save my name,
An' frae oblivion screen me, O;
Then farewell fortune, farewell love,
An' farewell, bonnie Jeanie, O!

III.

AULD ETTRICK JOHN.

AIR—"*Rothiemurchus' Rant.*"

THERE dwalt a man on Ettrick side,
An honest man I wat was he;
His name was John, an' he was born
A year afore the thretty-three.
He had a wife when he was young,
But she had died, an' John was wae;
He wantit lang, at length did gang
To court the Lassie o' the Brae.

Auld John cam dadding down the hill,
His arm was wagging manfullie
He thought his shadow lookedna ill,
As aft he keeked aside to see.

His shoon war four pound weight a-piece,
On ilka leg a ho had he;
His doublet strang was large an' lang,
His breeks they hardly reached his knee.

His coat was thread-about wi' green,
The mouds* had wrought it muckle harm;
The pouches war an ell atween,
The cuff was fauldit up the arm.
He wore a bonnet on his head,
The bung upon his shoulders lay,
An' by the neb ye wad hae read
That Johnnie viewed the milky way.

But yet, for a' his antic dress,
His cheeks wi' healthy red did glow;
His joints war knit an' firm like brass,
Though siller grey his head did grow:

* Mouds,—*Moths.*

An' John, although he had nae lands,
  Had twa guid kye amang the knowes;
A hunder pund i' honest hands,
  An' sax-an'-thretty doddit yowes.

An' Nellie was a bonnie lass;
  Fu' sweet an' ruddy was her mou';
Her een war like twa beeds o' glass,
  Her brow was white like Cheviot woo';
Her cheeks war bright as heather-bells,
  Her bosom like December snaw;
Her teeth war whiter nor egg-shells,
  Her hair was like the hoddy craw.

"Gudewife," quo' John, as he sat down,
"I'm come to court your daughter Nell;
An' if I die immediately
  She shall hae a' the gowd hersel.
An' if I chance to hae a son,
  I'll breed him up a braw divine;

An' I'll provide for a' the lave,
  Although we should lye aught or nine."

Wi' little say he wan the day,
  She soon became his bonnie bride;
But ilka joy is fled away
  Frae Johnnie's cantie ingle side.
She frets, an' greets, an' visits aft,
  In hopes some lad will see her hame;
But never ane will be sae daft
  As tent auld Johnnie's flisky dame.

An' John will be a gaishen soon;
  His teeth are frae their sockets flown;
The hair's peeled aff his head aboon;
  His face is milk-an'-water grown:
His legs, that firm like pillars stood,
  Are now grown toom an' unco sma';
She's reaved him sair o' flesh an' bluid,
  An' peace o' mind—the warst of a'.

Let ilka lassie tak a man,
An' ilka callan tak a wife;
But youth wi' youth gae hand in hand,
Or tine the sweetest joys o' life.
Ye men whase heads are turning grey,
Wha to the grave are hasting on,
Let reason aye your passion sway,
An' mind the fate o' Ettrick John.

An' a' ye lasses, plump an' fair,
Let pure affection guide your hand,
Nor stoop to lead a life o' care
Wi' withered age for gear or land.
When ilka lad your beauty slights,
An' ilka smile shall yield to wae,
Ye'll mind the lang an' lanesome nights
O' Nell, the Lassie o' the Brae.

IV.

LOVE IS LIKE A DIZZINESS.

Air—*Paddy's Wedding.*

I LATELY lived in quiet ease,
An' never wished to marry, O;
But when I saw my Peggie's face,
I felt a sad quandary, O.
Though wild as ony Athol deer,
She has trepanned me fairly, O;
Her cherry cheeks an' een sae clear,
Harass me late an' early, O.
O love, love, love!
Love is like a dizziness!
It winna let a puir body
Gang about his business!

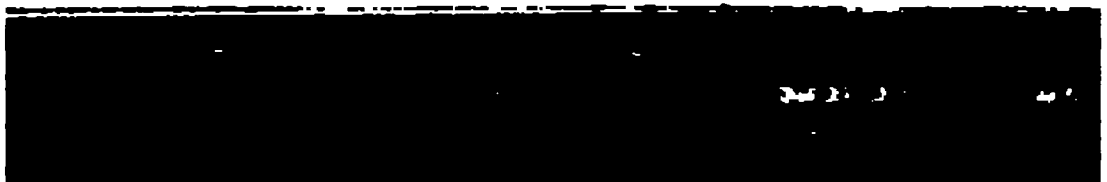
To tell my feats this single week
Would mak a curious diary, O;—
I drave my cart against a dyke,
My horses in a miry, O;
I wear my stockings white an' blue,
My love's sae fierce and fiery, O;
I drill the land that I should plough,
An' plough the drills entirely, O.
O love, love, love! &c.

Soon as the dawn had brought the day,
I went to theek the stable, O;
I coost my coat, an' plied away
As fast as I was able, O;
I wrought a' morning out an' out,
As I'd been redding fire, O;
When I had done, an' looked about,
Guid faith, it was the byre, O!
O love, love, love! &c.

Her wily glance I'll ne'er forget;
The dear the lovely blinking o't
Has pierced me through an' through the heart,
An' plagues me wi' the prinkling o't;
I tried to sing, I tried to pray,
I tried to drown't wi' drinking o't;
I tried wi' toil to drive't away,
But ne'er can sleep for thinking o't.
O love, love, love! &c.

Were Peggie's love to hire the job,
An' save my heart frae breaking, O,
I'd put a girdle round the globe,
Or dive in Corryvrekin, O;
Or howk a grave at midnight dark
In yonder vault sae eerie, O;
Or gang an' spier for Mungo Park
Through Africa sae dreary, O.
O love, love, love! &c.

Nae man can tell what pains I prove,
Or how severe my plisky, O!
I swear I'm sairer drunk wi' love
Than e'er I was wi' whisky, O!
For love has raked me fore an' aft,
I scarce can lift a leggie, O:
I first grew dizzy, then gaed daft,
An' now I'll die for Peggie, O.
O love, love, love! &c.

END OF VOLUME THIRD.

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